

A

PHILOSOPHICAL AND CRITICAL

HISTORY OF THE FINE ARTS,
PAINTING, SCULPTURE, AND ARCHITECTURE;

WITH OCCASIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON

The Progress of ENGRAVING, in its several Branches,

DEDUCED FROM THE EARLIEST RECORDS, THROUGH EVERY COUNTRY
IN WHICH THOSE ARTS HAVE BEEN CHERISHED, TO THEIR
PRESENT ESTABLISHMENT IN GREAT-BRITAIN,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III.

IN FOUR PARTS.

VOLUME II.

BY THE REV. ROBERT ANTHONY BROMLEY, B.D.

RECTOR OF ST. MILDRED'S IN THE POULTRY, AND MINISTER OF
FITZROY-CHAPEL, LONDON.

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*PREFACE.*TO THE READER.

TO a work like the present I did not consider it necessary to employ any preface, in my publication of the first volume, because the outlines of the subject were evident in the title, and the matter which filled up those outlines was easily gathered from the general contents. I should have thought it equally unnecessary in the present volume to premise any observations, if a spirit of opposition to what has already been published had not been shewn by a few men, acting in an Academic capacity, and as such taking to themselves a consequence which was by no means due to their objections, and still less to the very unfair and indirect motives on which it is too plain that they have acted.

As the whole of that matter, and of their conduct in it, has been discussed at large in a course of letters,

published some time ago in the Morning Herald, and addressed to those who appeared most forward in that opposition, I conceive that the best vindication, which I can prefix to this volume, of what has been written in the former, will be the republication of those letters. The reader will then be enabled to judge for himself, whether the labours bestowed on a work of that compass, which is embraced by the present, have been deservedly treated by those men.

RQB. ANTH. BRQMLEY.

To HENRY FUSELI, Esq. R.A.

SIR,

THE party which you have been endeavouring for some months to form in the Royal Academy, for the purpose of throwing a discredit on the first volume of my History of the Fine Arts, has now gone it's full length. By various insinuations, advanced at the expence of truth; by charges founded in ignorance, and made up for the moment, against it's literary correctness; and, not least of all, by uproar and confusion, very little becoming the tranquillity of an Academy, you have carried, at your last meeting, a vote, which at a former one you had lost by a great majority. By that vote the remaining volumes of my work, which are now in the press, are pronounced improper to be received in the library of that Academy.

Allowing that you and your party have the gift of prophecy, when you condemn what has never been published, it was not like men, in whom there was no worse spirit, when you have taken so much pains to diffuse in the public prints the malign influences of that resolution; and, in all probability, you have never troubled yourselves to reflect that a reckoning was still to be made, being satisfied that the blow had been struck home, and calculating that the antidote might not come in time to take off the poison, or might not penetrate to the same extent in which the poison had gone. For those consequences I must take my chance, while I follow one part of the precedent you have set me, by repelling the injury done me in the same public manner which you and your party have taken to wound me.

I am not fond of these appeals, and it is your own fault that the present is made. The objections made against my book, on a literary score, were yours alone. That appears to have been the share of the cabal, which you took upon yourself; the rest was all made up of folly and

formise, tending to implicate, in my views, other characters, who have never yet condescended to concern themselves about what is written by me, and participating, as I believe in my conscience, not more of a truant disposition to the interests of the Academy, and to the honour of the country, than of a spirit of disaffection to the most illustrious character in it, whose epoch was likely to form an eminent object in the progress of that work.

Those objections you thought fit, not as a reader, but as an enemy, to propound in the first instance to the Academy, for the purpose of sacrificing my work, - having never had the candour to convey them to me, and to learn what I had to say in reply. Having heard of them, I requested, by letter, to know the points of which they consisted. You gave me them under your hand. I returned to you an answer in writing, explicit and full, as I conceived, on every head; at the same time appealing to yourself, whether the manner of your attack had been fair. Notwithstanding that appeal, you returned to the charge at the next meeting of the Academy, and by garbling my answer, and otherwise justifying yourself in such way as served your purpose, you became the champion under whom your party fought their way to the resolution they have obtained. And that you might not lose one jot of the victory to which you had led them, they wrung from the body of Academicians a declaration of thanks to yourself, for the light which you had thrown upon the defects of my publication.

You can have no objection to this state of facts, because it is most adverse to myself, and it republishes all the triumph which your paragraphs in the public prints have so industriously endeavoured to circulate.

That triumph, if I do not mistake, will now be a short one; and therefore I hasten to those circumstances which would have prevented it, had justice been done to me, and which will leave me now, I do not

doubt, and the work which I have published, free from every prejudice arising from the present attack, if it shall be equally fortunate to resist any other censures that may be cast upon it.

I called upon you by another letter, immediately after that vote, to leave the private walls of the Academy, where you must stand uncontradicted, and to submit your objections to one or more of three Gentlemen whom I named, and from whose literary character there could not possibly be any appeal. Your answer, conveyed in very insolent terms, had nevertheless the pusillanimity to decline that proposal, leaving me to make that reference for myself. I now inform you that I have made it. Those Gentlemen have seen your objections under your own hand, they have seen the authorities quoted by you, and they have seen my answer. I do not need to repeat their names to you, because you have them; and in delicacy to them, I forbear to mention their names to the public. It was not necessary for me to carry this reference further in confutation of you; and yet it was not unnecessary, in justice to myself, from the prejudice of a vote so industriously circulated, to go further among those whose opinion is always of importance to an author. I must therefore acquaint you, that I have submitted the same paper and authorities to three other Gentlemen of the first class in the study of Art, one of whom is a character to which all men have looked up in this country with the highest respect for whatever concerns elegant art, or the literature connected with it.

Shall I tell you the result of those references? Taking them together in the gross, without discriminating exactly the expressions used by each gentleman, I have their authority to assert, that the objections laid before them in your own hand writing, and amounting at most to five in number, are most shallow and contemptible, in one instance most palpably ignorant, to say the best of it; and that, if they had all been better founded, they are too trifling and unimportant to affect the volume

which I have published. I hardly need to observe, that they considered the answer which I had given to those objections as satisfactory. Yet it is necessary you should know that they want no conviction of there being other reasons than those which have been avowed for this unmerited persecution.

It will be proper now, that the public, to whose judgment this appeal is left, should be made acquainted with those points, which your industry has discovered as defects in my book.

The first of your objections arises from my having contradicted Pliny, where he asserts, “ that no part of fine art was sooner perfected than “ painting, which was seen very admirable in Italy before the foundation of Rome.” If you move on Pliny’s authority, in a hundred places besides this you will tread on air; for assuredly he knew nothing of art, and he is so loose and incorrect in many statements, that, without other authorities, he is not always to be relied on. Painting was not perfect even in Greece so early. Before the time of Apollodorus, *i. e.* 300 years after the foundation of Rome, no Grecian painting was worthy to be much admired. For this you will not demur to the authority of Pliny, in which he happens to be right. But he is just as wrong with respect to Italy, to which he meant to be more partial. The whole current of history shews that sculpture was every where more forward than painting, and for reasons which are obvious. Now there are two excellent authorities to tell us what were the old sculptures of Italy, and particularly of Etruria, which were the best of all the Italian ones for many ages. Those authorities are Strabo and Quintilian, the last of whom is alone sufficient in point of art. They assert, that those sculptures were on a par with the Egyptian and oldest Greek statues—humble enough.

Pliny’s authority was just as good for you before you corrupted a

word in the passage, to make the objection better. *Durant et Cære antiquiores* (videlicet, *urbe Roma*). This is the passage which you have so loudly urged, to mark the weakness of my contradiction to the author of it. You think fit to alter *Cære* to *Ceræ*, making Pliny to speak of caustic paintings older than Rome. And what does your argument gain by that? Either Pliny's admiration of the old paintings, which he has adduced, must support you, or nothing. And let me whisper in your ear, that the author of those old paintings was a Greek, born in Ætolia. I do not say this to praise them, for the reason already given; neither ought Pliny to have spoken of them as he has done. But if your argument has gained little, your integrity, or your scholarship has gained less; for I aver that you read the passage wrong. You seem not to apprehend that by *Cære* is meant a town in Etruria; the connection of that sentence with the two preceding ones demands that sense; and so uniformly have all the compilers of dictionaries followed that sense, that you will find this very passage quoted by them when they speak of that Etruscan town.

Your next objection is meant to impugn my knowledge of Greek. I have said, that Parrhasius, in a picture of a crowded multitude, exhibited the *genius* of the people of Athens. You have told the Academy, and me too, with triumph, that the Greek word *Demos* means a *people* and not *genius*. I hope every school-boy knows so much. But, by your objection, I should fear that you have yet to learn what is the full sense of the word in the present case. You would render it by the mere *letter*, as if Parrhasius painted the personal figures of the Athenians. Knowing that nothing was less in his intention, and that he exhibited them in their *minds*, and not in their *persons*, I have rendered the word *Demos* by the *spirit* which becomes it here, but might not always become it, and have said that he exhibited the *genius* of the people of Athens. Were we to speak of HOGARTH's similar pictures of an English multitude, should we say that he painted the *people* of England, or the *genius* of that people?

Another objection attacks me as very weak, or very unfaithful, in my records. This objection is rather combined and perplexed; but I will endeavour to simplify it, and briefly. I have said, that to Parrhasius the ancients were first indebted for symmetry, or, as it is sometimes explained, proportions. You rebuke me by a quotation from Pliny, who has said, that Euphranor, at a later period, “first usurped or engrossed symmetry.” I answer, that only shews the perplexity of Pliny, for he had said the same thing, in effect, of Parrhasius, *primus symmetriam dedit*. In the same sentence he has left a second perplexity concerning Euphranor, who, he says, “first exhibited the dignity of heroic character;” and he had said of Timanthes long before, that “he painted the heroic character most consummately.” Now I presume it is regular to conclude, that the man who was first in the talent was original in it; but I cannot help remarking, how unfortunate it is for you and Pliny, that before he has finished the sentence which pays that tribute to Euphranor’s originality and perfection, he observes, that the heads and other extremities of his figures were very disproportionate to the whole of the body.

I have also said, that in the Greek painters, after Apelles, there were no original perfections; by which I mean none that had not been seen and eminently, in preceding masters. I do not see how it serves your purpose, in opposing this, to make Euphranor much older than Apelles. If you had made him younger, it would have been more consistent with your object. Still that object would have gained nothing; because I must repeat it, that Euphranor was not original in symmetry: *Parrhasius primus symmetriam dedit*. I will give what your argument wants; and will even contend, that Euphranor was somewhat later than Apelles, and did not flourish, as Pliny has placed him, in the 104th olympiad, near forty years before the artist last mentioned. Use it as you please, you will have no reason to thank either Pliny or yourself for meddling with this point. If you will collect the circumstantial evidences arising from the known epoch of Euphranor’s master, from that of Euphranor’s contemporaries, and from that which is afforded by some parti-

cular works of his, you will be sure as I am that he cannot be set down earlier than the 114th olympiad, at soonest.

I have also said, that Parrhasius wrote upon symmetry; and you oppose me by another quotation from Pliny, who has said that Euphranor wrote a volume on that subject, and that Parrhasius left behind him some drawings, which were embraced as fine lessons in symmetry. How does this prove me wrong? The matter is still where it was: you take the words of Pliny for your creed in all things, and I do not. I have as good authorities to satisfy me in this point as in the other of Euphranor's chronology, which Pliny has mistaken; but they are not material, nor is the subject worthy enough to be stated here: in a better place they may be given.

Not much enlightened by these discoveries of yours, the public will be as glad as I am that there is only another objection left. You dislike the words *Nebrides* and *Bassarides*, or perhaps the etymologies annexed to them. If the sight of my own MSS. will content you, you shall see them stand in their original Greek, *Nebris* and *Bassara*, by which you will perceive that I do not deserve the charge with which you have impeached me. In consequence of their being printed in English letters, as they are here, a mistake took place between the copier and the printer, when that sheet was not within my reach to be overlooked: but I presume it is not incurable in any other eyes than your own and those of your party.

These then are the formidable charges which you have collected to support so harsh a sentence as that which has been passed on my book, and on its author, who is living to feel its harshness. That book, it seems, ought not to be received into the Academic Library, because a copier or printer has been somewhat inaccurate in a point of little consequence—because its author has not construed a Greek word like a

school-boy—because he will not make nonsense of a Latin writer, where that writer is plain; and has not followed him, where he is perplexed, through all his inconsistencies.

With no other objections before me than such as have been brought, I think that I have more reason to rejoice than to be dismayed, although in that rejoicing no thanks are due to you or your party: it has its source in my own good fortune, that greater objections have not arisen from the investigation which has evidently spared no pains to discover greater, and in the assurance of that protection which a generous world will always afford to those who are injured.

If you conceive that any thing contained in those objections has left any other impression on my mind than contempt, you flatter yourself too much. The public will easily judge, how much those objections are worth. On the supposition that I have erred in any circumstance alledged, they will decide on the importance inherent in such questions as these, whether painting was perfect in Italy before the foundations of Rome, or not? Whether Parrhasius or Euphranor first discovered and exemplified symmetry and proportions? Whether the former, as well as the latter, wrote a treatise on that subject when at present we have none from either? Whether the latter existed before Apelles, or after him? Whether *Demos*, in Greek, is best translated by a *people* or the *genius* of a people? Whether *Nebris*, in the same language, means the skin of a deer, or of a leopard, so that either is spotted? And whether *Baffara* also in that language means a robe, or a shoe, or a sock?—Undoubtedly these will be thought very singular criticisms, on which to stake the merit of a whole volume: the minds which have suffered themselves to be blown into a rage by these, must be possessed of a rare curiosity, or of an acrimony ready to be disturbed and to overflow: the party, which these could be the means of forming, must be such, as we should deprecate in common society; and the Academic body, which could suffer these to agitate its

discussion, and to lay the foundation of its resolves, has left itself in the necessity of repairing its own character, no less than that of the man whom it has been brought, reluctantly, I believe, to injure.

I can easily conceive the excess of that gratification which was gained, when, for the lights which you had thrown on those important subjects, the Academy was either inveigled or stormed to give a declaration of its thanks. The lights you afforded must certainly be precious to any Academic body; they were the result of laborious investigation; they were drawn from deep literature, and the rarest knowledge of language; they were important to rescue truth and science from wilful and dangerous perversions; they were salutary to direct the student in his art, to give right views of character to the young artist, and to prevent the old Academician from becoming a fool. The applause which you gained was therefore richly your due, and will perpetuate your fame, if you can but keep the record of it for ever on the books.

Why then have you turned your back upon that honour, and upon those who conferred it? Three mornings had not afterwards elapsed, when, choosing to account under your hand for what had passed, you meanly shrunk from the situation in which facts had placed you. The truth is, your conscience smote you—*conscience makes cowards of us all*. You knew that you had been insulting the Academy in the same act which had injured me; you knew that you had communicated no lights worthy of the name; you knew that there was no darkness in the subject, which called for light, unless it were that which rested in yourself, and the few that stood beside you. They were therefore false lights which you held, whose greatest use was, in being so managed as to throw a shade over others, while they supposed themselves to be illumined.

Yet, false as those lights were, they answered your purpose before

the Academy, so long as no man bethought himself of changing the distance in which he stood, and of taking a different medium to view them. *Audi alteram partem*, is that happy change of distance, that happy variation of medium, which few false lights can stand. Fortunately for your plans, the shade which was first cast over a certain part of the room, abode for the night: and when the declaration of thanks was made for the lights you had bestowed, your secret enjoyment was, that it was given for what had not been received. That such was your meaning at bottom, which I am sure your conscience, and not your will, disclosed when you gave me under your hand these expressions, *it was not what I said that carried the success*, is at least a more creditable interpretation, whatever syncs it may suppose, than a plainer one, which exposes those expressions to a flat contradiction. So you laughed in your sleeve over all the parties concerned, not being aware that a gentle whisper from your heart, falling on your pen, conveyed this sure meaning to me, which truth will warrant, “it was not what I said that deserved the success, “or the thanks which followed it.” So I conceive, the Academy, too generously reposing on you at that moment, has by this time discovered, that neither success nor thanks were due to you for what you said.

But if you have thus renounced your title to their applause, why should not that applause be revoked and resumed? *It was not I that did it*, is the common shuffle of those wretches, who, conscious of wrong, seek to escape shame; and from that moment there ought to be an end of the advantages gained by the act which is so belied. I say not this for any substantial justice it would render to me, but as it would shew in that body a sense of justice to themselves. This point, therefore, rests between the Academy and you.

But there is an aspect of the case which bears between you and me: for, independant of that declaration of thanks which fixes the success upon yourself as a leader, I am other ways assured, that *it was what you said*

which did give success to the motion, directly in reverse to your own expressions under your hand. You therefore stand convicted of a falsehood, meanly taken, with all the pusillanimity of a man who has given a blow in the dark, of which he leaves others to bear the accusation.

I consider the correspondence which you have afforded me as the only indulgent circumstance in the transaction which has occasioned this appeal. That correspondence I view as a part of the whole, and a very important one, because it discovers a deeper origin of the hostility which you have helped to form against me, than I could otherwise have obtained, with equal assurance. I have just referred to that correspondence for a few expressions, which went to the question of your veracity ; I shall now refer to it for others, which will give the world another peep into your mind on this occasion.

You have told me, that “ you have at least *a better* right to treat my “ book as you have done in the Academy, than the Rector of St. Milledred’s has to publish theoretical principles on an art which he does “ not understand”.

I know not any declaration which I should more have courted from your pen than this, if I could have thought it possible for any sensible man to have committed himself upon it ; and I grasp it now more eagerly, because it gives me an opportunity of employing just vindication, rather than severe reproof ; it brings into issue the pretensions on which I have engaged in a History of the Fine Arts ; and to that issue I am called, I have not fought it.

In that declaration you vainly assume, that the theory of elegant Art is shut out from those who are not professors of it’s practice ; and that men of other professions are not competent to understand it. If you

will inform me how that theory springs from that practice, or is essentially combined with it, so that the latter must be acquired in order to obtain the former, then may I have some new lights to correct the views by which I have hitherto been guided. Till then, I shall go on to conclude, that all theoretical principles, being the result of reasoning and discussion, are capable of being illustrated in books; and if they have passed in ever so many languages, they only require the education which is sufficiently master of those languages, and sufficiently enlarged in it's studies, to comprehend them. To these you shall add, if you choose, whatever importance may be thought to rest on those critical acquirements, which are strengthened by the opportunities of a personal inspection into works of art. Still it will neither follow, as you would insinuate, that the professors of Art, who have had those opportunities, must necessarily be masters of those theoretical views; nor, as you boldly pronounce, that the Rector of St. Mildred's, or any other Rector, may not have enjoyed a sufficient portion of the one, and be master of the other. Will you say that years of study and observation, passed in foreign countries, are as necessary to a knowledge in the theory of Art as in it's practice and execution? Are there no other methods short of that, which can furnish a pretty sure acquaintance with what has been done in the world of Art, and with the principles resulting from it, and affecting it's interests? If I had pretended to take the pencil into my own hand, or to tell any artists upon earth how they should handle theirs, there might have been some better ground to denounce my presumption, unless I had anticipated my vindication by competent proofs of professional capacity. Some proofs have been given by other Rectors, though not by that of St. Mildred's; the Academy has seen those proofs with applause, and you have seen them, perhaps, with envy. I hope it was not from the experience of any such illiberal imputations as that which you have thought fit to throw on me, that the Divine, to whom I more particularly allude, was induced to give up his diploma in the Royal Academy. But he held the pencil in character; and I affect

only to give the history of it's progress, it's spirit, it's fortunes, it's relative effects, with those of the other Arts throughout the earth. I was not aware that History changed it's name, the moment it came in contact with Art, nor that what was dispersed in volumes of theoretical and even critical Art was mystic and unintelligible but in the hands of a Royal Academician.

I have therefore no apology to make, that I have presumed to understand, to connect, and to reduce into useful views, what has been properly authenticated to me by reading, by conversation, or by personal inspection. I conceive there is no apology to be made, that in some instances I have extended my observations beyond the letter, but never beyond the spirit, of those authorities which have commanded my reliance; and that, in other instances, I have advanced some new views in theoretical principles, which have appeared to me just and solid, and conducive to the improvement of elegant Art. All that can be required of me is, that I leave my readers in possession of those authorities on which I have advanced; and, for what is new in it's views, it is the correctness of those views which must find it's own support in the public opinion.

I do not wonder, however, that Mr. FUSELI's denunciation is thus levelled at theoretical principles, or at those which have fallen from my pen. *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo*. Those principles appear to have pinched him more severely than any historical parts to which he has objected. There are men who cannot be brought into system, whose eccentricities revolt from the ideas of classical order, and who cannot be wound up into sublimity, if it is by principles that they must reach it. These are a painful touch-stone of ability, on which men of circumscribed minds will look with as much horror as those of short stature used to look on the tyrant's bed, whereon they must be stretched head and foot to reach the destined measure.

Will you, Sir, disliking my theoretical principles, indulge the world with any others from your own professional practice? Will you condescend to exemplify the sublimities of your Art, which may be reached with an absolute neglect of every thing that approaches to theory or reason? Will you shew us, from the abundance of your researches, combined with the abundance of your works, that novelty in scientific improvement, by which *reverie* shall worthily take the place of theory, and caprice shall supply all the advantages which have ever been supposed to flow from principles? Then shall the young student of the Royal Academy embrace with thankfulness that new and shorter road to the perfections of his art; and the success of your motion, for the expulsion of my book, shall remain for ever undisturbed by me.

Till we are thus enlightened by you, I must go on to make the best of what your past correspondence has afforded.

ROBERT ANTHONY BROMLEY.

MARCH 20, 1794.

TO THE SAME.

SIR,

WHEN you told me that you had at least a *better* right to use me as you have done, than I had to publish theoretical principles on the Arts, it was not necessary for you to increase the harshness of that declaration, by calling my undertaking *arrogant*. You say, “theoretical principles, including arrogant criticisms”. It is not for me to say whether arrogance ever made any part of my constitution. If it has, I am sorry for it. In that book, however, which has given so much offence to you, I have had no consciousness so strong and unremitting as that of diffidence; because I know that the ground on which I tread is delicate, and that in the Fine Arts, perhaps more than in general liter-

ature, there is so much behind what is seen and understood by the most intelligent that he who dares to be arrogant gives the best proof that he knows but little, and will soon find himself in the situation, which, I apprehend, is become yours, and by the confession of all your feelings.

Whether I am justly charged with arrogance or not, it is of some importance that you should know, for your future government, whether you have not yourself been giving a very large and free scope to that spirit. To this part of the case you seem to have been blind, and therefore it is my business to take off the mask that is over your sight;—you have called me to this, and therefore I embrace it.

The opening of your cabal in the Academy was as wanton and unprovoked, as its attack upon me was gross and bitter. To call it insolent is too little, for it trampled upon every thing which Gentlemen and men of decency will ever regard. It then appeared, indeed, under another leader, who shall presently take his share in the reckoning. But you was just as deep in the plot then, as you have appeared since. There is a Gentleman, whom I need not name to you, and to whom you communicated, many months ago, your design, then in agitation, of crushing my book. Had you been a stranger to that spirit which you charge upon me, you would have paused at least upon his advice. He told you, without knowing particularly the grounds which you meant to take, “ that the measure was extremely severe, and what the world “ would disapprove; that if there were any wilful and material perversions of truths or facts, it were another matter; but that accidental “ and slighter misconstructions could never be worthy of such treatment, especially to a living author; and that, by the same rule, your “ Academic Library must be left without a book”. But you were a Doctor of the Sanhedrim, and my fate, as you conceived, was in your hands: your power, therefore, could brook no interruption.

I am not sure whether you would have left your first leader, who is so well known to mangle, and tear, and shatter whatever he undertakes, to have conducted the last act of your *favourite* Guillotine upon me, if he had not so completely mangled, and torn, and shattered the subject in the outset, that you were afraid it would have been lost in its fragments. You therefore came forward to collect those fragments, and to take the execution upon yourself. I grant there was no arrogance in your assuming that office, because it was a base one. And, perhaps, you think there was no arrogance in the personal abuse, which kept no bounds towards me; in the uproar which made a Pandemonium of the Assembly; and in the fury, which for some time paid no more regard to the laws of the country than it had done to common sense. You will also think, perhaps, that there was no arrogance in pronouncing upon my private motives, and arraigning them, as well as my publication, in a motion framed to brand both with infamy. If there had not been a more amiable and just temper in one of the Academicians, whose conduct always does him honour, and who prevailed to extinguish that first projected motion, you and your party would probably, as he told you, have been brought to your senses by the voice of law; you might have learnt from another tribunal than that before which you are now brought, what arrogance means.

Thus far you shared with a few others that amiable feeling, of which you are so kind as to make me a partaker. It afterwards became entirely your own, or so as to leave you unrivalled by others, when with so much pride of heart you came forth on the stage a single champion; when with so much confidence your profound confutations of me were insisted on; and when with so many papers, cut and dried for the purpose, those confutations were enforced. I forbear to call any man arrogant, who rises, as you express yourself, *in his place*, and especially *when called upon*, though it be to murder the character of another who is absent—I will not call that by the name of arrogance

which is said or done by a *Ruler in Council*, although it be to cheat that Council out of it's senses, or to bully it with bookish authorities into submission. I will not call that language arrogant in any member of an Assembly, which reprimands others for carrying out of those walls any circumstance that has passed within them, and denounces that liberty as treachery to the whole, and as insolence to the man that forbids it. I will not pronounce that behaviour to be arrogant, which avows itself *accountable to none* for any lengths to which it may go in it's own conclave.

Having excepted all those circumstances out of the general features of arrogance, I may, without rudeness, give you the full share you had in them. So you did certainly dictate to that assembly; and having done so, you charge me with arrogance, because I have been humbly and patiently engaged in reading for some years, in order to extract and compress the information which may save others, that choose it, the trouble of reading as much for themselves.

Here, then, it is brought to issue, to which of us the greater share of an arrogant spirit belongs.—To stand acquitted of that spirit, there should be some sort of manliness in the individual, which I do not conceive to be lost, even by his receding from his errors. But the arrogant man will shew nothing that befits the manly character; he will flinch from every point, and even from the support of himself, when once he comes to be opposed; he will skulk from friend to friend, for the purpose of supplicating what shelter may be gained from shades of difference between one man's words and another's, who may have pronounced upon his conduct; he will bear what no other character on earth will bear; and at last, in the fullness of his disgrace, unable to face the body to which he may belong, and which he has duped and insulted by his arrogance, he will damn it for ever, and give up his diploma.

There is a sentence yet unnoticed, in your correspondence with me, not less singular than any others by which you would justify the part you have taken against me in the ROYAL ACADEMY. You say, “ had my “ publication been faithful in it’s records, and fraught with instruction, “ it would have received due encomiums from that body”.—What foundation there is for the first of these charges, at least from your mouth, the public is by this time enabled to judge from better documents than loose assertion; they are in possession of your objections on that head, and I apprehend that they will expect some further proofs than those which have been offered, before they will admit that charge. If you have others to support it, they ought to have been produced: as that has not been done, I must consider your conclusion just as it is warranted by your premises, and tell you that your logic would be kicked out of every school in the world.

The latter charge will require more to be said upon it, because the defect, which is there alledged, makes no part of your first objections, that I know of. I am indebted to your private correspondence for revealing it. The charge is heavy, if it can be sustained; because I here avow, in addition to what my publication has avowed, that my great object has been to instruct, and to make the arts instructive; and I must have been very unfortunate indeed in the pursuit of that object, if you are right in your censure. The first part of that volume is employed to urge the importance of making the pencil an instrument of instruction; to call forth those views in the studies of artists, which may give their works a lasting fame; and so to raise the character of a new school, such as is the British, on the splendor of talents, vying for the improvement of the world, rather than for the momentary satisfaction of beholders. I may have failed in my efforts, and your more refined ideas of instruction may have discovered the chaff, which offered itself as wheat, in what I have written. But before that be granted, there is something on your part to be reconciled; for in every proof consistency is needful.

Either you have not kept at all times the same language on this point, or your friends have not kept it for you. I do not absolutely charge you with writing the *Analytical Review* of my book in 1793, but I want no proof of your connection with the conduct of that Review. I might put this matter in a closer shape. The attack which was there made on my publication was very much managed, and it breathed the air of great moderation. It bid fairer for profelytes than the very scurrilous and personal abuse of the *Critical Review*, whose arrows could never wound me in the opinion of candid minds, especially if it were known to others as much as it is to your party and to myself, from what quiver they issued. Of the latter, one word more would be too much. But in the former Review the great imputation was, that I had pressed the instructive purposes of the Arts too much; that their exercise must not be so shackled; that in their scope, they are, in fact, a *lufus naturæ*, or, at least, a *lufus artis*; that *dulce est defipere* was their free licence; and that it had been the fault of others before me, with the far greater names of *Winckleman*, *Mengs*, &c. to draw the pencil from it's legitimate province of raising pleasure into a formal and systematic exercise.

Such was the argument which appeared convenient then, and in which there was policy, at least. In a public Review, addressed to the world at large, which might easily have it in their power to satisfy themselves on the subject, it could never have been safe to urge the objection which you have employed in your private review of that book to myself, and to scout it for it's neglect of instruction. And yet I can easily believe that your heart then went to the full length of the objection taken in that Review. If it was flattering to artists in general, who could not but relish the latitude there given to their pencils, we know that to you, beyond all others, the *lufus naturæ* must be precious—to you the *dulce est defipere* is never out of tune; it is the very motto which you would inscribe on all your works. And therefore in the more private Review, which you committed to my hands, *out of that abundance of your heart the*

mouth spoke, in expressions only a little varied. When you there rebuked the Rector of St. Mildred's for his *theoretical principles*, you were in unison with the Analytical Review, which reproached me for having written a *homily* on the instruction of the pencil.

How you will reconcile that rebuke with the other, which is now principally before us, I do not know. I grant that in your private correspondence, you were acting in a different field, and therefore you might put your objections in any shape that you pleased. That which appeared most humiliating to me, would naturally be chosen in the heroism of the moment. Perhaps you mean me to understand, that having thought better on the subject, you are now become a convert to the importance of instruction in your art. And how great must be my triumph in that discovery, let my own endeavours in the way to it have been ever so feeble? I shall no longer blush for the heaviness of my *homily*, nor sorrow over the defects of my *theoretical principles*, when they have produced such a miracle in the world of Art, as the conversion of *Fuseli's* pencil to instruction.—Know, ye Amateurs, and all ye Artists of the British school, that *Fuseli* is become an advocate for instruction.

Yet let us not leave, in this triumph, any part of truth or justice behind us. Has not his pencil always instructed? Was there not instruction in *Little Red Riding-hood*? Yes; for old women teach the story to children; *pull the string, my dear, and the latch will come up*; it is the first lesson by which they learn to move to and fro. Was there not instruction in the *Night-mare*? Certainly, the very next in progress after the former; for, next to teaching infants how to move about, is the teaching them how to lie in their beds. *Don't lie on your back, my dear, and no harm will come to you.*

In these things we cannot refuse you the credit of having given useful instruction to babes and sucklings. But what have we not to expect from

the greater stretch of sentiment, which is now caught by your pencil for grown people? I anticipate it all; and, thank Heaven, the period is at hand, which will save us from any long suspense before we are gratified with the exemplification of that more grown instruction on your canvas! No less proud of the conversion which I have wrought, than eager to see the first fruits of it, I shall wait with some impatience for the day on which the ACADEMIC EXHIBITION opens, and shall be the first man to rush in at the door for the earliest enjoyment of your new instruction. I trust that you will not disappoint the expectation which is thus on tiptoe to meet you. I care not much in what line of sentiment it be conveyed, so that we have it. I own that I am not very fond of allegory, because it puts me to the necessity of being profound in another study, before I can look on such a picture to any purpose. But I will be content with that species of instruction from you, rather than have none; and in that I understand with pleasure that you are far advanced, by the allegorical display of SHAKESPEAR'S SPIDER. ENTANGLED IN HIS OWN WEB!

But it is time to part, and a word at parting is natural with most people, if they have conversed ever so long together. In Italy they are said to take leave at three distinct times before they go to bed; at sun-set; when candles are brought, and when they go away. I fear you have thought me more tedious than an Italian, and I doubt not that you would excuse my present formality, and make me one bow for all, if I would but be gone to rest. That is something gained then; it is worth one's while to teach a man how to make a good bow, and to be supple and civil, more especially if he has been used to tread the tight-ropes, and to carry himself too stiff.

I own this parting grieves me, and therefore I cannot help adhering to that Italian method. The conversation I have had with you has been pleasant to me, although to you it may have appeared one of my ho-

milies. In that case, you must put it to the account of your own genius, which, though compressed in ever so small a compass, is so pithy, when it is put on paper, that it calls for the most abundant attention to do it justice.

For myself, indeed, I might have better calculated the consequences of calling your pen into correspondence, if I had properly regarded what was declared by the *Critical Review*, to which I have already adverted. I should have recollected, that you was the person destined there to level my work by a superior undertaking of your own. Having consigned me rather hastily to oblivion, that Reviewer uncharitably raised you up to take my place, while some remaining life had left me to feel too sensibly the hardship of such a measure. He called upon your *learned pen* to *occupy the ground*, which he pronounced to be *unengaged* by my feeble and presumptuous attempts. I own that appeal to your *learned pen* struck me at the time as rather singular and questionable in its shape, more especially when I coupled it with one of the first sentences in the Review, which insisted, as you have rather done in your letter to me, that there was no auguring well of a History of the Fine Arts, where there was not some professional skill in the writer. I have certainly heard strange things concerning the writing of that Review, which have not at all been contradicted, either by subsequent events, or by your correspondence with me. I was not aware, however, of the new and masterly stroke displayed in that invocation of your *learned pen*; it was indeed a most dextrous way of anticipating general favour, and perhaps general subscriptions, to a work, which, I should suppose, could not have been thought of much before.

Commissions, I fear, must have been slack when your pen, which can but give one colour, was destined to supplant your pencil, which can shine so brilliant in all; or there must have been a dearth of subjects, to snap so eagerly every thing that offered, and to jump into any man's

shoes at once. I hear you reply, that the painter's plagiarism is privileged; every man's thoughts are his, if he gives them his own execution.

But what says your pen now to the matter—that *learned pen*, which has been so warmly invoked? If I guess right, it is already sick of its office. If it could speak, it would say to its master, “ Why did you “ push me so forward and so hastily? I always told you that I had not “ vanity enough to serve *you*, and I cautioned you never to commit me “ on points. I might have skulked for ever under the reputation of “ being *learned*, if you had not exposed me; let me then be hid for ever. “ To your pencil I leave whatever chance it may have of succeeding better in the Fine Arts; but the world will never more endure *my* “ interference.

What then do you yourself say now to that call on your *learned pen*? Some people are too cunning for themselves; and others do not know, or do not consider, when they are handling edged tools. In that gratifying moment, to be called upon out of the whole world for a *learned pen*, you should have paused, and asked yourself, what if it should be discovered that I am a prompter, at least, if not an actor in this private drama?

I have pity for the man who has brought himself to shame, although it be by persecuting me. I will therefore give you a proof of my generosity, by well-meant advice. There is a work much better cut out for you than mine, because imagination will there supply the place of laborious research—it is a new edition of *Milton*, with new designs of your own. Your *learned pen*, and your sublime pencil, would lay all commentators and editors on the shelf. As you are so happy in the modes of anticipating general favour, and general subscriptions, turn your thoughts that way for your *Milton*.

You tremble and look pale. Am I then a prophet after the event?

and have you really engaged in such a thought? Then let me see if I can be as lucky in guessing at your measures. An idea has struck me. Suppose you make sure of some of those interests, which are well known to keep much closer together than others—no matter if by so doing you sacrifice something due to your King and Country: you will not sacrifice your conscience. What think you of the staunch Republican? He will die for you; I say for *you*, because he knows you: and your work itself is a credential to him; a Republican poet can never be brought out so properly as under Republican auspices, if snugly conducted. Thus you will be *cunning little Isaac* himself. If that circumstance should transpire, do not be discouraged, nor suffer your undertaking to stop at the first number.

But you have a title in yourself, which is a host of security to you. Will any man cope with your pencil in the illustration of *Milton*? That sublime book, never touched but by *learned pens*, was reserved for you to give the genuine spirit to all its scenes—*Angels and Devils, Spirits and Substances, bright or obscure, Ministers of Health, and Goblins damned, Gorgons and Hydras, and Chimæras dire, Hell-hounds with wide Cerberian mouths, Witches eclipsing with their charms the labouring Moon, the snaky Sorcerers fast by Hell-gate, Asphaltic pools, the great Sorbonian bog, vapours impenetrable, shades of death, darkness visible, chaos in its eternal night*, these have waited for your hand to give them the reality and effect to which even the Poet's display is not equal. In Pandemonium you cannot possibly have a rival; you have given it to us already as true as the original; repeat but that design, filled with the group of *that industrious crew*, whose machinations you so well understand, and Pandemonium is compleat.

To that scene I now leave you, while I call your first leader to reckon with me for the part which he has taken in this unmerited persecution. I had once thought to have retained you as the vehicle of my address to

your associates, reflecting that, as you must now be full of electrical fire, from the many shocks you have received, you might very commodiously convey any fresh strokes to those who hold you by the hand : but some respite to you is charity ; and the old saying is a true one, " Let every " tub stand on it's own bottom". There are points in this singular persecution of me, for which no man is so properly answerable as he who first took them to himself ; at least I cannot so properly vindicate myself on those points as by reasoning with him. The man, whom I mean, I shall name at once—COPLEY. To tell you the truth, although, like fellow-conspirators, you have taken your separate parts in this league against me, and your part has been hostile and wicked enough, I do not know that your venom has been half as malignant as his.

ROBERT ANTHONY BROMLEY.

APRIL 8, 1794.

TO JOHN SINGLETON COPLEY, Esq. R.A.

SIR,

I UNDERSTAND, that your friend Fufeli has had very disturbed slumbers since I have suffered him to go to bed. He complains, that I have exposed the secret manœuvres of his *Milton*, and overset it's intended publication in Numbers. It seems, that, when he drew out his poignard, and directed it against me, he did not bargain for being stung even by a nettle. I find, then, that my advice has turned out to be a prophecy ; or, to make the worst of it, some kind spirit whispered it in my ear ; and it makes good the observation of a wise man, whose writings are very much in my way of study, that he who uses another ill, *teaches that other an evil lesson against himself*. It is not improbable, that you also may be in the way of profiting by some such

lucky prophesy, by the whisper of some such kind spirit, or by the experience of some such useful lesson, in the course of the present appeal, which your malicious and unwarrantable conduct towards me in the Royal Academy has brought upon yourself.

I shall use no preface to the subject between us. You became the first, and if possible the most vehement, but certainly the most virulent leader in the attack on my late publication. You affected to see in it high treason against the Arts, and against the Artists too of every age, but especially against those of Great Britain, living and dead. The ground you took was therefore different from that which Mr. Fuseli was afterwards called upon to make his own. Yours was the argument *ad homines*, which is always the most feeling one, be it ever so indifferently made out; and that it needed any others in its aid, could only be owing to the wretched hands into which it had fallen.

On what grounds you had discovered in my book that heinous offence abovementioned, is stated, in fact, from your own language, which shall appear by and by. I have no objection to meet your charge, and am content to be tried upon it.

But before we get to that point, it will be necessary to make the public acquainted with the real origin of that displeasure which you have taken to my publication. A purity of motive is necessary in every thing that takes the face of opposition, at least for its lasting success; or, although a mere bungler in policy may have the luck to amuse and deceive for a time all the wisdom and integrity that is in the world, yet the world will neither forgive him, when it finds itself to have been so amused and deceived, nor will it forsake the man, or the cause, who has been so unworthily abused.

When you first began your invective on what I had published, and

indeed every time that you *bored* the Academy on that subject, it is in the recollection of those who were present, that you declared “ you had “ not read a line of the book, you took up the sentiments which had “ been suggested to you by those on whom you could depend.”—This was not a very favourable feature in your invective; and, with the knowledge of this single fact, it will be easy to conceive how you came to make so few profelytes to your purpose in the course of many months. It will reasonably, then, be suspected, that some bitter impression, of a personal nature, had taken possession of your mind; for, without that, no man of common sense would engage, on being prompted, in so desperate a design of wounding another, without satisfying himself by the best evidence whether the prompter might be trusted.

I shall make no apology for disclosing what that bitter and personal impression against me was. It breaks no confidence, it interferes with no obligation. There are more persons than one living, and in full remembrance of the fact, to whom I predicted, seven years before my book was published, that, whenever it came into print, I should find you that implacable enemy to it, both in and out of the Academy, which subsequent events have proved. Defend yourself, if you can. It was in *Slaughter's Coffee-house*, so long ago as the year 1786, to the best of my recollection, that your motion to expel my book from the Royal Academy commenced in your heart. It began on that day, when I sat as one umpire to decide between you and another, who had complained of the grievous calumnies which you had circulated against him—when we were unanimous to do justice to that man whom you had injured, and to undeceive another whom you had artfully blindfolded—when I would not be tampered with by you in private, but, more warmly perhaps than warily, flew into the next room to reveal before your face what you had so endeavoured, by a sort of managed disclosure, to practise upon me—when, in short, I had the misfortune, if I may so call it, of being placed along with others in a situation of

feeling alive, and as active as ever, that dark and desperate painter, CARAVAGGIO, whom I had concluded to be dead near two hundred years before.

It is among the variabilities of human events, that one of those umpires, whom I shall not injure when I say he was the man "on whom you could depend for those suggestions of exceptionable passages in my book", was the very man, who, from that day, often declared before me and others, that he never could have a dependance on you, nor a connexion with you. But you are now sworn together in the same league, and you have a most happy dependance on each other. A happier subject for dependance you cannot have, for if he cannot accomplish his mischief, he will turn round with a smile, and take you by the hand.

That I do not mistake, when I pronounce that your motion in the Academy was begotten in the transaction abovementioned, you will recollect the appeals, which, in the course of your Philippics against me were frequently made to you by an Academician, who could never forget that transaction. He challenged you to examine yourself, if there were no personal motives at the bottom of your purpose.—He told you that he was sure there were; and you never replied.

The point which you have made the offensive ground of your objection in the Academy to the volume which I have published, is the Comment there given on "the Death of Wolfe, by Mr. WEST". This is a sin for which you have said I can never atone; a sin against all the Artists of the earth; and a sin for which the Royal Academy in particular ought to stigmatise that book.

It was somewhat awkward to press such an argument before that body, which had placed the author of that picture at their head; and certainly it required feelings of an uncommon sort to address that argu-

ment to the very man whom it meant to insult. One shudders at this idea, no less for the outrage committed on decorum, than for the trial which must have been so distressing to an insulted individual.

Independent of that ungracious circumstance, I conceive that in other respects you have quite as much reason to exculpate yourself from some not very commendable passions, as I can have to repel any charge which may be brought against me on the ground of having selected that picture.

At that moment I did not apprehend that I was doing any dishonour to the British School, or that I was raising up a spectre to haunt your imagination, and to harrow up your feelings; or, little as I am disposed to compromise with some sorts of minds, I believe I should have thought twice, before I had once committed any artist to the loss of his senses. I lament that no earlier occasion had happened to produce that fine apostrophe, which broke out in one of your Academic Philippics; for then, whatever mischief I have done by naming the "Wolfe", might have been avoided. "Mr. R——, take you care of what you said the other night; I remember well what you said, and you shall answer for it: you declared that Mr. West was the first painter in the world. Yes, you shall answer for that language". Honest R——, half dismayed by so abrupt and menacing an apostrophe, replied after a moment's pause, "I said, he was *one of the first* Painters in the world". "Oh!" rejoined the softened apostrophe, "Oh! Sir, that is another matter; now I am better satisfied". I should have rejoiced if that beautiful rhetoric of your *heart* had been brought forth by any other means than mine;—had that *galled jade winced* sooner, I should have taken the hint, and not have added to the *wringing of your withers*.

As it is, I can only vindicate myself. I will take your general charge

first. You have said, " that in my selection of " the Wolf", I have " sacrificed every thing to friendship".

Whether, in that instance, I have sacrificed any thing, must be left not to the assertions of one who declares, that he has not read the book, but to the good sense and candour of those who have read it. But, I apprehend, you have not considered the compliment which is involved in your censure. With some reproach you tell me, that I have friendship; and perhaps it is not impossible to be proved, that, in your ideas, friendship is a culpable feeling. I glory in it; I hope it has ever marked my life, and I will endeavour that it always shall. Let it profit me or not, let it bring me back coldness, perfidy, or persecution, it is the glorious character of man, and it shall be mine in perpetual successions of instances, and after thousands of disappointing experiences, which would chill others.

But, in the present case, there is nothing to be chilled. Even the persecution of your cabal can give no chill, where the gain on my side is so precious; for let me lose what I may in any other view by the malice of that cabal, my friend must be secure. The firmness of his heart will never suffer any compromises to supplant the reciprocities of friendship. In and out of the academy, he is beyond your reach to shake the fidelity, which will stand by the man who has stood by him. And in that chair, which he so deservedly fills, he will never permit the warmth to be lost, which it had always known in his predecessor, whose heart glowed no less than his pencil, and whose sensibilities of friendship were never to be jockeyed out of that principle, which is as much the proper cement of great and good men, as it is the language of divine perfection, THEM THAT HONOUR ME I WILL HONOUR.

So much for what you have called a sacrifice to friendship: But indeed I have sacrificed nothing.

In the explanation of this assertion, it is necessary that I refer to what I have written, although it be to that which you have not read. But I am now justifying myself to the world, and not to you, who, having read nothing, can only be the vehicle of my purpose.

In the chapter which discusses the provinces of historic and poetic painting, and which, with all due humility, I may pronounce to be original, because I have never read a page that treated of those subjects in that way, certain principles are laid down for the discrimination of those provinces. That discrimination appeared to me as just and fit as the discrimination which has ever been established in the various parts of dramatic writings, or which has caused any writings to be considered as classical, taking that word as expressive of a specific order or quality. It appeared just as right for the preservation of a purity in composition, and for the prevention of incongruity in matter, consequently for the exaltation of due character, and the production of a fine effect, that especially the higher classes of the pencil should not be debased by mongrel conceits, as that tragedy and comedy, or any particular branches of poetry, should, for the same ends, be kept within the bounds of that specific character, which a refined attention to their spirit has pronounced to belong to each.

It was easily foreseen, and it was predicted, that such a discrimination would displease some minds, as bringing them into trammels; and yet, with a moment's reflection, those could only be wild or shallow minds, to whom every outline is grievous, and with whom therefore no man, who is anxious for the sublimity of genius and of composition, will study a compromise. The brilliant and the strong in mind are not so easily alarmed; and they will presently embrace a preference of that which is most beautiful and perfect.

While, therefore, the principles on which that discrimination is

founded, with respect to the higher works of the pencil, arise from considerations which are common to those compositions and to others of a literary character, the man of true genius has nothing to dread, but every thing to encourage him, in those principles which ultimately viewed resolve themselves into this conclusion, viz. that an historic painting, in that superior character which becomes epic, does not depend for the legitimacy or the sublimity of its composition on matters of fact; but that, if the incidents which constitute the scene are so naturally connected with the real action that they might as probably have happened as any others, it may not only be pure as an historic display, but may perhaps be raised to a grander climax, with the freest choice of those incidents, although not one of them, in fact, made a part of the event which is represented.

From him who had laid down those principles less could not be expected than that he should illustrate them by some adequate exemplification of the pencil; and it is obvious that no exemplification could be so complete, or so proper, as one which afforded the painting of an event that had happened within our memory. That circumstance was indispensable to our ascertaining the precise difference between the incidents in the picture and the known incidents in the transaction itself.

For that exemplification "the Death of General Wolfe", as painted by Mr. West, has been selected; and that selection has given you as much offence as if there had been a picture of your own which might have claimed my attention in that discussion, or as if, among artists, jealousy were so predominant, that the honourable mention of one were a dishonourable treatment of another. It has been the ground work of all the faction which you have raised in the Academy, and of all the abuse which I have received from that faction.

Will you, or any of your party, tell me where I could have found a subject in the British School more worthy, or equally worthy, to be selected as an illustration of those particular principles? God forbid that I should think of excluding other works of living masters among us from being selected, wherever merit is fought, as eminent illustrations of other lessons in the arts; or that any disparagement to those, whom every admiration of my mind holds high in honour as a body of artists, should be gathered from my pen. I know very well, and it is in my favour that every man knows, what was done by HAYMAN at Vauxhall, on events which passed within our memory; and I have been privately told that I might have gone there for my exemplification. I believe the best reason for sending me there was, because HAYMAN is dead. But if he were living, I am not afraid to reply, that I will not consent to take from Vauxhall the exemplification of those epic principles to which I have referred.

I know that you would not wish me to have done so. Another wish was nearer to your heart, if it be true that the hearts of friends are one, or that we may guess from the tongue what the heart means. A man, who *now* calls himself your friend, and who can no more shun the being put in a ferment by every thing that starts within his reach, though not within his concern, than water can refuse to be heated when the fire is under it, reminded me a year ago that your *Gibraltar* was every way equal to the choice I had made for my exemplification. I could have answered him, that I knew a painter from America, who, before his arrival in this country, had sent hither a *squirrel* as the harbinger of his fame, and soon after his arrival, having been gratified for the first time in his life with the sight of a picture of VANDYKE, called for his *squirrel*, and declared with rapture that in that *squirrel* he saw every thing in colouring and masterly execution which had given celebrity to VANDYKE's pencil.

With better authority, therefore, than was held out to me by your friend, I may consider the American *squirrel* as opposed to "the death ' of WOLFE in America," for an exemplification of those epic principles; for if that *squirrel* was at least equal to one of the best works of VANDYKE, I may be allowed so far to stand up for the dead as to declare that it must be at least equal to your *Gibraltar*. Perhaps I have only changed places for the worse, and instead of deriving some dignity from the thunders of that Spanish fortress, I may have committed my epic principles to be decided by the jerking of a *squirrel*. I shall therefore get back again to the greater subject proposed to me by your friend.

To have selected your picture of *Gibraltar* for the illustration of any historic principles would have been an act of the greatest temerity. To use a common phrase, it would have been adding butter to bacon; it would have been larding that which is already so rich in itself, that any other work appears lean and meagre beside it, compared with its peculiar fortune. Indeed I could not think of marring, by any notice of mine, the felicity of a picture, which has been so rarely and so completely established by its author; and on the principle that too many cooks spoil the broth, I was always persuaded that the dish, of which I am speaking, was so nicely dressed by the man who first undertook it, that I could not do better than sit down quietly with others to feast on what had been prepared, without attempting to mend it.

Yet, if to add to the celebrity of that work, or to the skill of its author in maturing that celebrity, be out of my power, I may be allowed to gratify my pleasure in becoming a second organ of the merit of both. I feel so much for the success of ingenious merit in all cases, that I shall embrace the opportunity now before me of recording those precious traits of that work, which may perhaps serve it as much in this way as in a more formal volume. By this means I shall also strengthen

as I go the general reasons already hinted, which might induce me to decline any other descant on the picture in question.

When that picture had received the liberal price of a thousand guineas from the first Corporation in the kingdom—when it had been exhibited in the fields for two years, and had there produced to its author twice the sum which had been given for its purchase—when it had afforded the author an opportunity of seeing the world, and had obtained for him the expences of a proposed journey to Hanover, for the purpose of taking four faces, first, by the present of two hundred pounds from a generous Alderman, and then, by the contribution of a friend, who went half in those expences, being too polite to calculate closely for others whom the author's pleasure had associated in his trip—when it had furnished the cause of a second call on the same munificent body, to compensate for an extraordinary length of time, which either had been continually indemnifying itself, or was a tax to be laid on his own genius—when it is now ripening into another harvest by an engraved publication, which, if it should not diffuse universally the *best proofs*, will leave *those* proofs to him who knows how to enjoy them—What need can such a picture have of any further attestation to its character, as an historic composition?

And why should we urge that picture as an illustration of *epic* principles? Surely it was not *those* principles for which the author contended, or which would at all come up to his contemplation. Theoretic principles fill only the mind; he who is intent on such principles will rarely bring grist to the mill; at least, he will not feel with spirit the words of *Betterton*—

———“ Just at the hopper will I stand;
“ With joy my heart exults to see grist ground,
“ And mark the clack how sweetly it will sound.”

No, they are very different principles, of which that picture must be

brought as an exemplification. And I am ready to acknowledge, that, in it's own way, it is a superior exemplification indeed; an exemplification unrivalled in the world, from the beginning of which, I believe, no painting was ever so grateful in it's returns to it's author, and no thirst of an author for those returns was ever so abundantly fed, yet without satiety. Not even in ancient Greece, with all the uncalculable hundreds of thousands of Sesterces bestowed for a single picture by an *Attalus* or a *Cræsus*, was there ever an exemplification to be found equally successful with that barren, stony, rock, when put upon your canvas, in the rare, and sublime, and occult principles of pencil-alchymy. Every artist works in his own way; and no man can deny that the way, whatever it be, which raises a painting to it's highest value, is a great example.

Yet not too fast—that may possibly be accomplished without much genius, and indeed with all the tameness which is the reverse of epic principles, and is allied in the humblest degree to the historic itself. If such an instance has ever occurred, it must be charity to open the eyes of such an artist, that he may see what belongs to that historic character which he so much grudges to others, and is so eager to take to himself.

I undertake then to shew, that a man may paint subjects, from which he shall take the name of an Historic Painter, while those pictures have no relation whatever to the higher or epic principles of the historic, and hardly any relation to the historic itself. It is from your works that I have gained this knowledge, and have learned to discriminate those gradations of the historic class, which do not appear to have been thought of by the ancients, and hardly to have been exemplified by any moderns before yourself.

In the British School, till you appeared, whatever had been attempted in the historic was generally conducted with some genius, which strove

at least to give some advantage, if it did not always give a real dignity to the subject. Those artists were not fond of creeping at the bottom of that class in which they exercised their pencils; nor have they given us any proofs that they were solicitous to steal a character by works, which should hardly verge on the province claimed as their own. Matter of fact scenes, therefore, were no favourite compositions of their pencils: and mere multitudes, which must ever be tame, if there were no contention, or if no points of national character were meant to be developed, were rarely brought forward to the eye, because they were not easily capable of elevation.

From your hands we have beheld the historic in new views; you have enlarged it's exercise greatly. You have taught us, in that class of composition, a *bathos* of painting, no less curious than the *bathos* of writing, for which some wits have been immortalized. Descending from the dignity of the epic, and indeed to shew your dislike of it, you have substituted in it's place dry matters of fact; in which, to shew the master, without losing the fact, you have given us miserable violations of nature; or if you have ever gone into what are called the licences of composition, the fact which you have undertaken has become more wretched for those licences. You have struck out a new class of the historic in that lowest of all it's possible stages, which is hardly a degree removed beyond portrait painting. Amidst these strictures, I know not whether I should absolutely pronounce that you have given us no proofs of your epic talents. To shorten the matter, I will acknowledge it as a part of your merit, that whenever you have thought fit to give any dashes of the epic, they have been unrivalled in their manner.

It behoves me to prove the truth of these observations by facts; and I will take your picture of the Shark, in the harbour of Havannah. That picture is a rare example of a matter of fact scene, and of that new sort of epic which you would recommend instead of the old one, as it loses not the

fact, although it may violate nature and probability. In justice therefore to you, I shall say, that the picture now selected is full of *your* epic.

And, first, there is an *epic* boat, in which the sailors are trying to save poor *Brook Watson* from the approaching shark : and certainly it requires the aid of *epic* principles to find room for that boat, which I should call a Spanish launch, between the masts of the ship, which lies at a little distance, and to which it must belong. It is equally in virtue of its *epic* construction, that, although pressed hard on one side by some heavy seamen hanging below the waist over the gunnel, it never *lifts*, as the sailors express it, it yields not in the least on that side to the water, it is as stiff as a church wall. I might ask many other questions on the relative circumstances of this part of the picture, which probably you would think were asked in peevishness, but which the intelligent would expect to be answered, if once they were put, and of which I can see no other possible explanation but that new and masterly *epic*, with which you have dressed this little matter of fact.

I pass on to the unfortunate young man. He sees the shark approaching : but why is he to swim off with his head towards the fish ? If I had not been well informed of your native country, I should have suspected that you had been born somewhat nearer to us, and had mistaken the feet for the head, or the head for the feet ; for as you certainly meant that he should get out of the shark's way, you must either have made that strange mistake, or have intended to shew us a new kind of swimming with the feet first. Most men so circumstanced would keep their heads as much averted as possible from the danger that menaced them : why then in the relative situation of him and the fish, was not the body turned the other way, or the fish brought on in a contrary direction ? As they now lie towards each other, the head must go first into the shark's mouth, if he shall choose it. But perhaps you meant to shew us an *epic* taste, or an *epic* politeness in the shark. Your researches may have discovered a particular liking in that fish for particular parts of

his prey, and that he looks upon human bodies as most men look upon a rabbit, preferring a limb to the head; and therefore to satisfy his luxury, or to shew his politeness, he avoids the latter, and swims farther on to seize upon the former. I am aware it was the province of the old *epic* to take liberties with facts:—here you have shewn us how that province may be extended by taking liberties with common sense.

But the sea itself, in which poor *Brook* is floating, has had a touch of your *epic*. Never surely was water so happily pellucid and transparent as that in which he swims, notwithstanding the shades cast upon it by the boat on one side, and by some degree of bustle given to the shark on the other. Its transparency is so rare, that we see almost round the body. You have converted it into a new phenomenon, replete with new beauties; for you have formed of that water the Greek *peplon*, whose delicately fine texture left all the beauties of the Greek forms perfectly traceable: you have gone even beyond that delicacy, for, by an infinitely finer shaving of the water, you have given us to see all the graceful forms of that handsome youth, as naked as if he were not in it. You have accomplished that wonderful difficulty of covering and not covering him, which would have gained you a statue among the ancients. The modern world of art, which does not go quite to that enthusiasm, must nevertheless acknowledge its eternal obligations for this discovery of your new manufacture and new taste; while the compliments, which I make no doubt you intended to pay to the person of the individual, must remain a debt upon his own mind.

Still the most curious and masterly display of your *epic* is seen in the shark itself. Its very motions are *epic*, for some of them, at least, were never seen in nature. To express its vehemence and eagerness for its prey, which in *epic* theory was natural enough, you have made its nostrils spout out streams of water. Here you should have pulled in your *epic* reins; for know, that of all the fishes in the sea, the shark is the most tranquil and still, when it goes to seize its prey. It is absolutely the

fox of the ocean, it makes no stir to alarm or apprise those whom it means to devour.

But you have been equally unfortunate in the form of that fish, only I bear in mind, for your apology, that it is an *epic* shark you have described. I can see no mouth in that fish to divide a human body, or to break afunder a human limb. The mouth of the real shark, as it should be for it's purpose, opens from one side of the head to the other ; as we are wont to say, from ear to ear, and it opens like that of a cod, whose form it much resembles in it's general frame, and, indeed, like that of most other round fishes, at the end of the nose, or extremity of the head. But in your *epic* shark, the mouth, which by the way, is opened wide before-hand, bears no more proportion to the jaw or throat, in the midst of which it is, as it were, cut out, than a pocket-hole bears to the side of a coat. In any other situation, and if I had not seen something like the head of a fish, I should have taken it for a large rat-hole ; and there evidently appears a necessity for the young man to remain still and passive, if not actually to assist in putting one of his limbs into that difficult hole, before he could become a prey to that fish.

Such are the exemplifications of the *epic*, uncontrouled by nature and probability, which you have given to be studied by the British School ; and such is the manner in which, as an academician in that school, you would teach rising artists how to execute this *bathos* in the historic. With these pretensions too, you have become so jealous of the historic character, as to be indignant if any exemplifications of historic principles in painting be taken from other works than your own.

For my part, I freely confess, that I sincerely deprecate any followers in that *bathos*, and in those new ideas of *epic* : and, for your own sake, I would advise you to put that picture in the fire. I hope the worthy man who has engraved it is already sufficiently indemnified for his trouble.

SEPT. 10, 1794.

ROBERT ANTHONY BROMLEY.

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BOOK IV.

ETRURIA.

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WHEN we follow the arts into ancient Italy, it is necessary to distinguish Etruria from the rest of that country. Whatever were it's original pretensions in art, if in fact it could make any, there is evidence enough of the very great and early advantages it derived from Greece. We shall therefore view with more certainty it's progress as springing from Grecian communication. And it is extremely probable, without carrying the prejudice of common opinion too far, to the injury of other parts of Italy, that Etruria took the lead of all those other parts in the study of art, and that the progress which was made in any of them was considerably derived from the examples which Etruria had afforded. To Rome, however, Etruria was certainly in the arts what Egypt had been to Greece. So much is fairly to be inferred from the single authority of Varro, quoted by Pliny, *ante ædem Cereris Tuscanica omnia in ædibus fuisse**. And so lasting was that influence of Tuscan taste, that Vitruvius marks it as existing when he wrote in the Augustan age: *ornant signis fictilibus aut æreis inauratis fastigia Tuscanico more†*.

Yet those leading pretensions of Etruria have been frequently so involved with others attributed to Rome, as to leave

* Plin. lib. 35. versus finem.

† Vitruv. lib. 3. c. 2.

the appearance of much contradiction in authorities on that subject. The clearest testimonies, however, concur to decide the point, that the Etruscans were a great and accomplished nation long before Romulus was known*. The several states into which their country and its government were divided, or the capital cities of those states, were from early periods the seats of ingenuity, especially in sculpture, to which they seem to have been led by natural disposition and favourite study. Volturnii, now called Bolsena, one of those capital states, is particularly recorded for its eminence in that branch of art; from thence the Romans gained some of their first sculptures, and long continued to avail themselves of its ingenious talents†. Veii, a city of immense wealth and great magnificence for some ages before Romulus, was not inferior to the other in the arts of elegance‡. From its ruins have been dug up in modern times many noble fragments of marble columns, statues, &c. which shew what was the spirit of its ancient pursuits§. What was the antiquity of that bronze-statue of Juno, found by Camillus in the temple of that goddess at Veii, and carried by him to Rome||, we have no sufficient authorities to state. The fact, however, appears unquestionable from these instances, as Quintilian has put it, that “the art of casting figures in brass, as well as of general sculpture, was possessed by the Etruscans in very remote antiquity**”. Cassiodorus speaks still more decisively, “that the Tuscans were the first who found out statuary in Italy††”. Pliny himself, although partial to Rome, confesses “that he was fur-

* See *Anc. Univ. Hist.* V. 16, p. 74, 75.
 Plin. lib. 34. c. 7.

† *Metrod. Scepheus apud*

‡ *Dion. Halicarn. Antiq. Rom. lib. 2.*

§ *Just. Fontanin. de antiq. hort. Romæ, 1723, p. 77, 78.*
 Camilli.

|| *Plut. vita*

** *Quint. lib. 12. c. 10.*

†† *Cassiod. lib. 7, 15.*

“prized to find that art so very ancient among the Etruscans, “whose statues were of old dispersed through the world*.” It is also remarkable, that when he goes to prove that statuary was an ancient art in Italy, it is to Etruscan works that his references are made. How inconsistent then must that author have been with himself, and with the authorities abovementioned, when he says in another place, that the art of modelling in clay, which precedes in idea and in fact statuary and sculpture and casting, was first brought into Etruria by Euchir and Eugrammus, who accompanied Demaratus the father of Tarquin from Corinth into that country?†.

That author has also spoken of paintings at Cære in Etruria, not only older than Rome, but more ancient than those other paintings which he has mentioned at Ardea and Lanuvium in Latium, and which he says were done before Rome had a being†. If those in Latium were not Etruscan as well as those at Cære, we have Pliny’s own authority that they were not done by a Latin artist, but by one who was a native of Ætolia in Greece, and who was as likely to have settled in Etruria as any where else in Italy. Beyond those instances we know nothing of the works of the Etruscan pencil. That those works should be attempted as well as sculpture, no question can be made, because in no situation have they ever been found to be cultivated exclusively of each other. We are not prepared, however, to believe that the Etruscan paintings had reached much perfection, because we recollect that the period claimed by those examples adduced by Pliny must have been at least between four and

* Plin. lib. 34. c. 7. sec. 16.

† Plin. lib. 35. versus finem.

‡ Plin. lib. 35. c. 3 & 10.

five hundred years earlier than the age of Apollodorus, before whose time Pliny himself has told us elsewhere that no work of the Grecian pencil was worthy to be looked at; and we cannot conceive the Etruscans to have been more forward than the Greeks, by whom they were assisted from the first; neither can we consider their paintings in the same period to have been more mature than their sculpture, which was certainly their more prevalent taste, and was ever forwarder in most countries than painting. What was the real state of their sculpture we shall see more closely when we come to follow it through its different epochs; contenting ourselves for the present with the general assertion of Quintilian, "that the merit of Etruscan sculpture", meaning that sculpture which was strictly in the Etruscan style, but not the general works of Etruscan artists, "was never more than equal to what came from the hands of the more humble sculptors in Greece*".

How far the Tuscan genius became in its turn serviceable to the Romans, and what were the obligations in general which these owed to the Etrurians as an elegant and enlightened people, will more properly be considered, when we come in the next stage of our enquiry to review the arts of ancient Rome.

The question at present is, how the Etruscans came by their arts? For the solution of this we must go back to Greece.

The story of Thyrrenus the son of Atis coming from Lydia, and founding a colony in that part of Italy which took the

* Quint. lib. 12. c. 10.

name of Etruria, will give us no light on this subject*. It is as false as it is puerile: it agrees neither with the current of history, nor with that chronology which is demanded by facts better recorded. It seems to have sprung very much from the analogy of a name, whose origin was not understood by the authors of that story, and from a faint and incorrect apprehension of a fact, which they had not been at the pains to investigate. The name of Tyrrenians, or Thyrsenians, or Etrurians, or Tuscans, had no need of Thyrrenus, the son of Atis, to fix it; that people were so called†, because the early inhabitants of their country had worshipped the *Tho*, or *Thyr*, or *Thur*, or *Thus*, or *Tus*, the supreme principle of life and death, acknowledged under some of those names by almost all the other nations of the earth, down from the ancient Scythians. The fact, of which a faint apprehension might have been had, was, that the Pelasgi first settled in Etruria; they were, however, the Pelasgi from Peloponesus, although they had originally come from Upper Asia, but not the Pelasgi from any part of Asia immediately to Etruria. So far the fable endeavoured to keep the fact in view, as it represents Thyrrenus to have been one of that people; and so far it may be received as a confirmation of the fact, if such confirmation were wanted.

It is not merely the difference of spot, from which the Pelasgi moved into Etruria, that creates these observations: the consequences must appear extremely different, in the view of the arts, when that people are found to migrate from Greece; early as the period might be. We have the authority of Pausanias‡, that the

* See Dion. Halicarn. lib. 1. sec. 19 and 20. D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 247

† Dion. Halicarn. lib. 1. c. 18.

‡ Lib. 8. cap. 3.

most ancient colony brought into Italy was carried by Ænотrus from Greece. Dionysius of Halicarnassus* has fixed the time of that colony to seventeen generations before the Trojan war, or nearly two centuries previous to the period when the Greeks took the name of Hellenes, and which is brought by the Arundelian marble to the year 1521 before our æra†. The migration then of Ænотrus into Italy took place about 1719 years before Jesus Christ‡.

This Ænотrus was of the Titan-family, for he was the son of Licaon, whose father was Pelasgus, and whose grandfather and grandmother were Jupiter and Niobe§. The Titans, as it has already been stated, were Pelasgians by descent, and the Pelasgians were sprung from the Scythians. Now from those Ænотrians in their migration were descended the Aborigines of Italy; for which reason Dionysius of Halicarnassus||, quoting several Roman authorities, pronounces those Aborigines, and the Latins descended from them, to be of Greek origin.

Subsequent to the colony founded by Ænотrus, other and more considerable migrations were made into Italy by the Pelasgi, when they were finally driven from Peloponesus by Deucalion**. In those settlements not only Latium but Etruria became distinguished. In the latter country rose up Croton and Pisa under the hands of the Pelasgi, marking by their first and last names their close relation to Peloponesus: for Pisa, before it was so called,

* Lib. i. cap. 3.

† Marm. Oxon. Epoch 6.

‡ D'Ancarv. V. i. p. 252, 253, note.

§ D'Ancarv. ibid.

|| Lib. i. sec. 5.

** Ibid. lib. i. cap. 9 & 10.

went by the name of Teuta, and its inhabitants were called Teutates or Teutans*, which names had been respectively given by the Pelasgi to the city which they had founded in Elis, and to its inhabitants; intending probably by those terms a variation on the word "Titan," as the distinction of the family to which they belonged.

Those Pelasgi carried with them into Etruria, as well as into Latium, whatever cultivation had been made around them in Greece. They carried with them the language and letters which had been used in Greece before their departure from thence†; that is, the language and letters which were properly Pelasgian, and which were employed by the ancient Greeks before they ceased to be so called, by taking the name of Hellenes. For it is a mere fable to assert that Cadmus brought into Greece the first letters with which it was acquainted. We read in history of an inscription, announcing an oracle delivered at Dodona before the departure of the Pelasgi into Italy, and probably that very oracle which is said to have directed their departure; that inscription was engraved on an ancient tripod, which was preserved in the temple of that place with the most religious respect on account of its importance; and the characters in which it was written were allowed to be of the very highest antiquity‡. Those characters, then, were beyond question the Pelasgian, or first Greek characters; the same which are spoken of by Pausanias and Demosthenes, as "the old attic characters§." They

* Servius ad *Æneid.* 10. v. 179. Pliny, lib. 3. p. 116. D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 246, 247, 253. V. 2. p. 367.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 7. Eustath. in *Iliad*, lib. 2. p. 358.

‡ Dion. Halicarn. lib. 1. c. 10.

§ Pausan. in *Eliac.* lib. 2. cap. 19. Demosth. cit. ap. Suid. in *Attico.*

could not have been the Cadmean characters, nor any of those which came into use after the departure of the Pelasgi; nor would that people or any other have carried into their new settlements any letters but those with which they had been familiar. Herodotus expressly declares, that the Pelasgi had letters, although he calls them “barbaram linguam;” and that Attica, as being the ancient seat of the Pelasgi, and therefore called by him “Pelasgicam,” lost those letters, when it became with the rest of Greece, Hellenistic*. Diodorus Siculus asserts, that Linus, Orpheus, Thymætes, Pronapides the master of Homer, and that poet himself, wrote in those Pelasgian or first Grecian characters†. The difficulty must be great, with every investigation, to lay down any sure and precise notions of those Pelasgian letters; but from the authorities of Roman writers we may conclude that they were like the Latin letters which were in use in many of the imperial ages‡; a proof of which is expressly adduced by Pliny from a very old inscription in bronze at Delphi, and brought from thence by some of the emperors to the Palatine library; that inscription is in the oldest Attic characters, by which we may regularly understand the Pelasgian, as distinct from the subsequent Phœnician§. Those Pelasgian letters then were not unlike the capitals which we now use||.

In these evidences we find the Etrurians and the Aborigines of Italy becoming possessed of a language originating from the

* Herod. lib. 1. cap. 57.

† Diod. Sic. Biblioth. Lib. 3. cap. 35. lib. 4. cap. 5.

‡ Tacit. Annal. lib. 11. p. 226. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 7. cap. 58.

§ See D'Ancarv. V. 2. p. 371—375.

|| Ibid. V. 2. p. 373, 378.

Greek. That language, communicated by the Pelasgi, might sustain less changes in Etruria than in the rest of Italy, at least for a great length of time, in which the Etruscan language appeared more constant in it's affinity to the source from whence it was drawn*.

A very short reflection will be sufficient to remove a degree of perplexity left upon this subject by Tacitus, when he says†, that “ the Etrurians acquired letters from the Corinthian Demaratus, “ and the Aborigines of Italy had them from the Arcadian “ Evander.” We have seen that both Etruria and Latium obtained letters from the Ænotrian Pelasgi near 300 years before Evander, who went into Italy 1269 years before our æra, and near 1000 years before Demaratus, who migrated into Tuscany not long after the time of Romulus. What then was the communication of letters, which these men made to the Etrurians or other Italians? We may consider Evander as introducing to the people of Latium those variations and arrangements (for such they appear merely to have been‡) which Cadmus had introduced into Greece, and which undoubtedly were established there when Evander left it. And in like manner we must consider Demaratus as making known to the Etrurians those improvements in the constitution of their letters, of which he had left the Corinthians possessed.

If Etruria, as well as other parts of Italy, obtained it's letters from the Pelasgi migrating from Greece, it derived also from the

* D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 256, note. V. 2. p. 215, 216, 367.

† Ubi. sup.

‡ D'Ancarv. V. 2. p. 376.

same source those principles of theology, which distinguished that people, and which became the principles and seeds of its own arts. We have observed that those principles were shewn in the etymology of it's name*—principles, to which the earliest and strongest habits of it's people were most remarkably attached. For no nation, in which those principles were fixed, was ever more solicitous than Etruria about all things which concerned religion and the gods. Those things she embraced and studied from principle; and the Romans, although they were too loose at all moments to do much from principle, yet when they came to make the like establishments from policy, drew from Etruria all the ideas on which those establishments were formed. In that country was found whatever appeared sooner or later in Rome, or in other parts of Italy, as a branch of those theological persuasions which had already influenced so many different people on the earth. There were seen it's goddesses, or prophetesses, or priestesses revered in their sacred caves and grottos, like the mother of the Scythians†. There were seen it's consecrated and inspired virgins, delivering their divine oracles as in the Pelasgian Dodona‡. There were seen those hallowed and devoted vestals, who kept the sacred fire, as others had done in Greece, and others again many ages before in Scythia§. And there was seen the worship of the serpent, diffused indeed through all Italy||. And so was equally diffused the worship of Bacchus**, with every circumstance which had made a part of his rites in Greece, or which had been included in the appendages of his influence. There

* D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 246, 253, 261.

† Ibid. lib. 2. sect. 52.

‡ D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 485.

† Herod. lib. 4. sect. 9.

§ Ibid. lib. 4. sect. 59.

** D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 73.

was the mystic van* or cradle of Bacchus, analogous to the theological egg of Chaos†; the puteal equally dedicated to him, and on which oaths were taken‡; and the Priapus, acting under his supposed direction, and worshipped as his generating power§, only differing in name from the Lingham of the Indians, and the Phallus of the Egyptians.

These things, and many other points connected with the primitive theology of the Scythians, drew forth the early spirit of Etrurian arts. The most ancient monies of Volturni and other towns bore the impression of that asterisk, by which the nations of the East, both in their coins and other ways, had marked their early reverence of the sun as the principle of light and heat, or their emblematic reference to the Being in whom those attributes resided||. How far the influence of those theological sentiments had spread through that country has been shewn to modern times by some ancient bas-reliefs, which have been found in the neighbourhood of Rome. One of those, discovered in a tomb**, is as decided a representation of those theological principles, in some of their profounder points, as if it had been the work of an Indian mind, or had been found in any of the pagodas of the east.

Under all these evidences we see the regular link which Etruria formed in the chain of principles that drew forth the arts of other countries, and became equally operative on the spirit of

* Virg. Georg. 1. 166.

† D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 258.

‡ Ibid. V. 1. p. 391.

§ Ibid. V. 1. p. 83, 310, 396. V. 2. p. 60.

|| Ibid. V. 2. p. 240.

** Antichi Sepolchri di Pietro Santi Bartoli, Tav. 57. D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 486.

it's own. We see the Etruscans looking up to the same deities, calling them mostly by the same names, revering them under the same emblematical images, and cherishing the same ideas in the detail of their religion, which had been successively embraced by all the nations of the East, by Egypt, and by Greece. We see, therefore, the evidences of those Scythian principles, by which the world had been so powerfully impressed, and which had acted so importantly on the first spirit of the arts, rising in increased confirmations to our views, and forming a fact of which no reasonable doubt can be entertained. Etruria, as the leading country of Italy in remote antiquity, adding it's share to those confirmations, gives us also a clue by which we are to solve the earlier progress of it's genius, the source of which we are to find in Greece. Dionysius of Halicarnassus appears to have been rightly led to that source, not merely of Etrurian but of Italian cultivation, although he has expressed himself in a latitude which seems at first sight objectionable, when he takes occasion from a circumstance which shewed the early communication of the Romans with Greece, to say that "the former were a colony from the latter*." Had he said this, as he has actually done in another passage already quoted, of the Aborigines, or of their descendants the Latins, into whose place the Romans came, his assertion would have been sufficiently maintained by their succession from the Palæstian Greeks. Still more immediately just would have been that assertion respecting the Etrurians.

Let us now see what was the Etruscan style. On this head many curious disquisitions have been written, and much pains

* Dionys. Halicarn. Rom. Antiq. lib. 2.

have been employed, which have nevertheless contributed to obscure the subject more than to enlighten it. The generality of those who have engaged in this inquiry have not sufficiently considered the original relation of Etruria to other countries from whence it's first notions of art were derived, on which relation will greatly depend at least it's first style, if it's subsequent epochs were not also affected by the same cause. If a prepossession be suffered to take place in favour of Etruria as original in art, the style of which it was possessed will lose at least one circumstance important to the observer, viz. it's historical deduction, if it does not gain others which may not be due to it. The affinity it may have to what has been marked in other countries, the discriminations by which it may itself be marked, and the successions it may have undergone, are all needful views which will be taken most correctly, when we are regularly informed how it arose at first.

Among the researches which have been made into this topic, none appears to have done it more justice in a short compass, than an "Italian Treatise on the Etruscan language, printed at Rome in 1789, by an anonymous author;" who has reviewed the Etruscan style with a precision which shews his intimate acquaintance with the subject, although he has sometimes encumbered his arguments more than he needed, and has not been always as clear and distinct as might have been wished. We shall, however, take this means of laying his remarks before the English reader, by making them the principal ground-work of what we have to say on this part of our inquiry.

We must not conceive that the Etruscan style and the works of

Etruscan artists are the same thing. That style, called by the Latins *Tuscanicus*, does not apply so immediately to a nation as to a school. And it does not always follow that the artists of any particular nation work in the style of its immediate school. In modern paintings Feti is by nation Roman, but his style is Lombard. It has never been asserted nor insinuated by any writers, that all the works of art of the Etruscans were Tuscanic. That name was given to the style which first ruled in the school of Etruria down to a certain period. How early that school commenced, or how near its commencement may be carried to the origin of the nation itself, it may be difficult to ascertain; although it is not difficult to point out monuments of that school, which leave no doubt of appertaining to its earliest epochs. Neither is it easy to say with precision what was that period of time when the Etruscan school gave place to another spirit, or at what periods it might embrace those partial variations which might lead eventually to the change of its style. In the nature of things those variations, and the final change, must have been gradual. It will be sufficient for us to mark their stronger evidences, where they are decided by any monuments.

As infancy is every where the same, we shall not be surprized to find the Etruscan style labouring under the same imperfections as those which attended both the Egyptian and the Grecian style in their first stages. Accordingly Strabo expressly puts upon the same footing the original style of all those countries. Describing the taste of an Egyptian statue, he says, "it is like the Etruscan statues, and the very old ones in Greece*." It must

* Strabo, lib. 17. p. 806. edit. Amstelod.

be observed that he speaks of the antique Egyptian, and not of that which may be considered as modernized, for Adrian was not then in being; and so with respect to Greece, he does not mean to compare the Etruscan statues simply to the antique Grecian, such as were those of the age and taste of Miron, but to the more antique still, whose design is known by the bronze statue of Polycrates, and by the oldest monies of Magna Græcia.

This is plain from a passage in Quintilian, which is worthy of attention. He says, that “the works of Calon and Egeias were “of a harder kind, and very near to the Etruscan, *duriora et Tuscanicis proxima*; those of Calamis were less rigid than the “former; and those of Miron were softer than the last.*” The hardest, therefore, and most rigid of those antique sculptures, which were worthy of being named among the Greeks, were nearest to the Etruscan style.

Pliny himself, with all his devotion to his own country, has in fact subscribed to this declaration. For, although he has referred to Etruscan arts in remote antiquity, it is remarkable that he has neither given us the name of any one of those Etruscan artists, nor has he passed a word of commendation on any of their sculptures, except the Apollo in the Palatine library, which by the way carries every appearance of having been produced in a later epoch, when the Etruscan style was wearing off, by the melioration of Grecian spirit. It is also true that he found but little to commend in Egypt and in ancient Greece, at least he has been as sparing in his commendations of what was done in the

* Quint. lib. 12. c. 10.

antiquity of those countries as in his applause of the Etruscan style*. Is it not fair to infer, that he considered the earlier style of all those countries as pretty much alike, and affording little to boast of? His argument was served by the antiquity of Etruscan arts.

The style of them all must have been nearly equal in merit, as an infancy in art, which in every nation, and in every period of time, let it rise when it may, will surely be the same. In the first works of the Egyptians we find very much the same method which appears in the Italian works of the eleventh or twelfth century; the eyes are sharp at the corners; the face shapeless; the fingers long; the feet ill-placed; the figure without proportion, without attitude, and never grouped; the relief extremely low. By such marks as these we shall obtain an idea of the oldest Etruscan works, some of which are preserved in the cabinets of antique bronzes. And there we find the Etruscan figures very like those of the more ancient Greek medals. There are also other Etruscan idols still more rude, and with eyes hardly opened, as they appeared in the first Greek statues of Dædalus†.

In stone, there belong to the earlier stages of that Etruscan style the "three adopted foldiers" in the Etruscan museum‡; which, besides the marks abovementioned, speak their great antiquity by a beard or hair as long at least as that which we recollect in Pompilius, Brutus, Camillus, and Curius, and which is

* See Caylus, in his *Memoirs of the Academy*, concerning those strictures of Pliny. *Memoires de Litter*, vol. 25. p. 350 et 355.

† Diod. Sic. lib. 4. sect. 76.

‡ Pl. 17.

called by Horace, Tibullus, and other Latins, *intonfus*. Such was the use of all Italy in the first ages of Rome, as may be seen in the Volscian bas-relief of Velletrius, and in the Hamilton-vase*.

Beyond these, and some little idols, we meet with few monuments in the class of statuary, which can be depended on to evince the Etruscan style. It is rather extraordinary that these are left to us. And yet some of those little idols, which carry very much the appearance of Etruscan, have been found in Greece. Nevertheless by some circumstance or other the difficulty is relieved. The genius in the Barberini-palace, although similar in many things to that in the Medici, is apparently Grecian, not only because it is certainly more ancient than the latter, but because its style of the hair was quite unusual in Etruria.

On sarcophagi, of which the celebrated Guarnacci has made a curious collection at Volterra, there are not found many proofs of that style which has been described above as Etruscan; for a plain reason; because the sarcophagus, which manifestly alludes to a Greek fable, or, in other words, the custom of burning the dead, and enclosing their ashes in an urn, was hardly ever seen among the Etruscans, or in all Italy, in the earlier ages†. The most ancient practice was, to inter the dead, and to mark the place either with a covering, or with that little pillar which is seen in the Etruscan museum‡, and which by its rude workmanship and character appears to have been among the most ancient monu-

* Pl. 24, 25, 93.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. V. 3. c. 2. Fabr. Inscrip. p. 15.

‡ Vol. 3. pl. 16.

ments of Italy. Sometimes ingenuity would give place to a little statue, or to the exhibition of a man among Genii, whether winged or unwinged, or of a sacred character, as is done on the silver vase in the abovementioned museum, whose characters have been shewn to bear the evidences of very ancient date*.

In marble, Etruscan statues are not so easy to be ascertained, and the doubt is encreased, if the marble be Greek. There are of this kind several which have been commonly called Etruscan, such as the Minerva†, and some others of the Villa Albani; two of the Barberini-hall; and two of the Royal Gallery, viz. the head of Pallas, and her statue; but these are in Greek marble, and therefore should seem most fitly ascribed to the Greek school. The same observation must be made of many bas-reliefs, whether they be originals or copies, which are now at Rome; such as that with the name of Callimachus in the Campidoglio‡, and others which Winckelmann ascribes to the Etruscans; but their marble is Greek, and therefore it must be left to the intelligent to determine whether they appear to maintain those epochs of the Greek style with which they should be connected. We would speak in the same manner of the twelve deities, and of the Leucothoe with Bacchus, in the Villa Albani§; of the celebrated Capitoline altar||; and of another altar and candlestick commonly called Etruscan. Nevertheless we may safely take for Etruscan the round altar of Count Staffa in Perugia**, on which is cut a funeral ceremony; there are besides a great

* See Dempst. V. 1. tab. 78.

† Sig. Can. Foggini Mus. Cap. tab. 43.

|| Ibid. tab. 5.

‡ Mon. Ined. tab. 17.

§ Mon. Ined. tab. 56.

** Mon. edit. V. 3. tab. 22.

many urns Etruscan; and so are the bas-reliefs of the horned grotto. The only question on these last is, whether they do not belong to that second epoch in the Etruscan style, of which we shall speak presently.

If under the foregoing circumstances, and indeed in a general aspect, there be such a similitude between the Etruscan style and that of the oldest Greeks that the discrimination may not always be easy, yet there are others in which that discrimination is plain and constant. And these we shall find in the cloathing of the figure. The older Greeks adorned the head with long channels or ringlets of hair, which fell down over the neck, as may still be observed in the Mercury and other medals of those artists, in the ancient Proserpines on the medals of Syracuse, and in the head of bronze found at Herculaneum, more ancient than all the other bronzes that we know of*. On the contrary, in the Etruscan medals, and idols, and other works, those hairs were commonly either straight down, or cut as it became the Roman fashion; or, if they were formed into channels, they either fell about the forehead, or at most encompassed the whole head. The figure or character, (if so it may be called) we naturally find in each of those ancient schools to be a mere copy of the national features and national form respectively, without any great skill or concern about the idea, since the artists of those times worked only after nature. The Etruscan heads have the profile less straight, and their figures have usually less slenderness, than the Greeks†. It may be said that the Etruscan style in their figures is conformable to that of their

* D'ANC. V. 2, p. 16.

† Diod. Sic. lib. 5. c. 40. Catull. Carra. 37.

architecture. The Tuscan order is the stoutest of all; but it is the least genteel.

Hitherto we have spoken of the Etruscan style in it's first epoch, and in it's hardest manner. For it had a second and more meliorated epoch, as we have already intimated, still preserving the name and the constitution of the Etruscan style. Indeed, it is natural to suppose that the original hardness and rigidity of that style was continually wearing off. When we consider that the Etruscans were a people naturally fond of fine arts, and moreover as industrious as they were ingenious, it is not to be imagined that they would not make a progress equal to the opportunities of improvement which were afforded; and those opportunities they had, when the arts had become advanced in Sicily as well as in Greece. The many collections of Etruscan urns and idols shew us at this day their gradual progress from great ignorance to a good apprehension. That progress must have been assisted in an especial manner by their communications with the Greeks*, which were kept up not only by commerce, but by colonies of Greeks frequently migrating to Etruria, either from motives of speculation, or from the pressures of such public circumstances as those which sent Demaratus and his friends from Corinth to that country†.

That this was a principal source of their improvements is plain from the abundance of Greek fables, which were engraved on their pateras, on gems, and especially on sarcophagi, and which,

* Winck. Hist. V. 1. p. 164. Mon. Ined. p. 26.

† Strabo, lib. 5. p. 119. Plin. lib. 35. c. 12.

if their various types were united together, would form perhaps a better series of celebrated facts from the mythological age of Cadmus to that of Ulysses, than is made up by monuments which remain from the Greek or Roman chissels alone. In the expression of those fables there are the plainest evidences of Grecian tuition, and of an influence which came much closer than that of oral tradition, although it were true that in some circumstances the uncertainty of that oral tradition might have been the cause, as Winckelmann supposes, of those equivocal descriptions, and even variations from the authorities of Grecian writers, which are sometimes found in those Etruscan engravings. But they are more often expressed with the same minute particularity in which they are read in Homer, and Æschylus, and other tragic writers. Even in the Greek *costume* there is no neglect*: the furies are assisting to a murder just as you see them represented by those tragic writers among the Greeks†. The cloathing, the shields, are Greek: the coat of mail, the helmet with its plume of feathers, instead of the *cassis* which Isidorus calls Etruscan, are as they appear in the Greek marbles. The architecture is more frequently Grecian than Etruscan.

By those fables not only more enlarged ideas were given to the Etruscans, but a method of representing them, to which they had not before been competent, and which served them in the representation of other subjects. More than those assistances were not wanting to an ingenious people: in science, as in nature, but few seeds are required, where the soil is good, to produce an abundant encrease. In Etruria too, into which those

* Mon. Ined. p. 2.

† Æschyl. Choeph. 5. 527.

fables passed, and indeed in all Italy, was enjoyed much greater quiet than in Greece. The energy, therefore, which had assisted the Grecian fancy in those fables, and had enabled it to draw a scene the moment it was beheld or read, became translated at the same time into that new climate, and was fostered in it's growth; insomuch that in process of time, and in certain places, that country might vie with some of the artists of Greece. We should be too hasty, however, in saying so much of this second epoch in the Etruscan style, on which we are now engaged.

To illustrate the passage which that epoch was making to greater advantages, nothing can be cited more favourable than the celebrated gem of five Theban heroes, which was formerly in the cabinet of Baron Stosch. The figure is not fine, nor proportionable, and therefore no traces of the Greek taste were than yielded. Yet Winckelmann has marked there a good apprehension of anatomy; and every one may observe in it the usual passage which is made by art, when first it means to quit a beaten path; that is, it strikes at once into the opposite excess. So it was in the present case, when it left that primitive stiffness and stupidity, from which the figure was conducted to a proportion which shewed itself in lesser parts, to an excessive discrimination of bones and muscles, and to an action in the movement which was quite unnatural. Another defect subsisting in that style was the want of character. One same head serves equally, if it be possible, for a Diana and a Venus, for a Bacchus and an Apollo.

On these accounts the works of that second epoch have not

indeed been much prized by Roman authors, because the greater part of those works were not considerable ; to the rest, however, as a smaller portion bordering on a better taste, they have not refused some admiration, and with some reason. For, it must be confessed, amidst those defects there broke forth much of that beauty, which it is said the Romans greatly valued. They were pleased with that simplicity of form, which carried as it were the image of those customs that marked the excellent antiques. They were pleased with that diligence, or, as Pliny called it, that *curiosity* in small matters, in cloathing and in ornament ; that exactness and finishing of folds, that border of the mantle, that curl of the hair. The necklace, the seal, the chaplet, the symbol, afforded as high a pleasure even in the time of Quintilian, as was derived to many from the speaking of the ancient Latin. As an example of that style may certainly be taken the goddesses with a crown of oak in Mus. Etrusc. pl. 3. and better still the supposed Juno Argiva, Ibid. pl. 23. or the Mars lately obtained, but we believe not yet published.

From that curiosity and luxury in dress, whose ultimate effects became fatal to Etruscan freedom*, as it's immediate influences affected the taste of Etruscan art, arose the many precious gems engraved in that taste ; the necklaces and other ornaments, with which ladies are represented in bas-reliefs ; and which were never seen in Greece or Rome ; and the profusion of gilding laid on the sarcophagus of Perugia, and more especially of Volterra†.

* Dion. Halicarn. lib. 9. c. 16. .

† Gori Mus. Etr. V. 3. p. 127.

If we can depend on the evidences of that urn, that is to say, on the *Aff* found within it, and on the pictures of men placed upon it, all of which have the beard shaven, a usage which was introduced most probably into all Italy as well as into Rome not earlier than the year 454*, that taste must have continued for some time after the 474th year of Rome.

In some instances, however, were beheld the evidences of a different and better taste, whatever share in it Etruria might have; as in the celebrated urn of Scipio, now in the Clementine museum, which must have been wrought in the same age with the urn last mentioned, and which has a taglio, and a Doric frize with triglyphs, and with roses of various fashions. In that urn of Scipio there is a great likeness to some of the Etruscan sarcophagi, which shew hardly any other difference than in their greater size. Not very distant also from the time of Scipio, if we consider their use as dedicated to the rites of Bacchus, which were finally prohibited in the 568th year of Rome, must have been wrought the three mystic chests lately discovered;—that of Kircher, with the Latin inscription on it, and on the patera found with it;—that of Signior Visconti, with the Etruscan inscription on the patera;—and that of Mr. Byrest†. All the three shew what that epoch had to boast of, as to a good style, both in the history of the Argonauts cut around them, and in the little statue of the cover, which the two first have, especially that of Kircher, which is moreover of a better Etruscan style, although it be the work of a Roman. The same design is found in many figures of another chest referred to by Bianchini in his

* Plin. lib. 7. c. 59.

† Mus. Pio-Clem. V. 1. p. 81.

Univerfal History*, which is now preferved in the Borgian muſeum at Velletri, and is aſcribed by the learned to the myſteries of Bacchus, although the Prelate Borgia believed that it alluded to the univerfal deluge. The animals engraven on it ſeem indeed to be of a very ancient workmanſhip, if that which is rough is ſufficient to paſs for ſuch; but the women and the men are very well wrought, nor do they ſhew any thing of the antique beyond the poſition of the feet.

From theſe evidences it will appear, that in this ſecond epoch the Etrufcan ſtyle was ſtruggling with ſome ſucceſs againſt the rudeneſs under which it had originally laboured; that it had gained a better apprehenſion of deſign in ſome points, although it's improvements were by no means equal in all the parts and objects of deſign; that if in the common effects of zeal to get rid of what was coarſe and rude, that zeal fell into the oppoſite extreme of labouring too much on what was little and trivial, yet the proſpect was opened by that exactneſs in what was little to an equal correctneſs in greater parts; that although the Etrufcan ſtyle was not loſt, nor the Grecian gained, yet the way to the latter began to be ſeen by men of ſuperior diſcernment, and a progreſs in it was made in proportion to the degrees in which individuals were elevated in talents.

That progreſs was compleated, and the Grecian ſtyle was gained, when in the language of Horace, *Græcia capta ferum victorem cepit, et artes intulit agreſti Latio*†. The victory of Mummius Achaicus happened in the year of Rome 608, which

* Pa. 178.

† Hor. Epift. lib. 2. Ep. 1. v. 157.

may be considered as closing the second epoch of the Etruscan style, and opening a third and last epoch to the ancient arts of Etruria. Perhaps the Etruscan style itself may be looked upon as then vanishing, when those artists became imitators of the Greeks who were gone before, and rivals of those Greeks who were living. Their possession of the Grecian style, however, could not have been effected at once, it must have been gradual. And that gradual, but quicker, movement was conspicuous in many things. In all the urns of that period, which may be seen in Volterra and its neighbourhood, gilding is banished from alabaster, the proportions of bodies are more just and expressed with more life, the heads are more fine. The masters of those works shewed in general that they observed good rules, or at least imitated good performances; yet there is wanting a perfect execution, especially in the delicate, which is the prerogative of Grecian art. If in that particular circumstance they never equalled the Greeks, we must not be surprized, since with all the vestiges of the Etruscan style that were lost in the Grecian, in all probability so much of the old national character as consisted in the taste of original details was never entirely quitted. And in that they should appear to have something to claim, since their imitation of the Greeks was not servile, but was reconciled with the care of preserving an original character*.

Here therefore we see the Grecian influence, which had been the first mover of art in Etruria, completing its connection with that country, by carrying Etruscan artists from original rudeness to the possession of its own mature taste. We must not there-

* *Usage des Statues*, p. 434.

fore refer to this epoch those passages of Strabo and Quintilian, which have been quoted before, and in which the comparison is made of Egyptian and old Greek works to Etruscan. To bring the Etruscan of this epoch into any such comparison would be to pervert every evidence. And therefore Horace, when he enumerates Etruscan statues among precious things, avoids the ancient word, and does not call them *Tuscanica*, but *Tyrrhena Sigilla**. So when he praises Italy as superior in the fine arts to Greece, *pingimus atque psallimus, et luctamur Achivis doctius unctis*†, we must suspect that he means particularly to praise the Etruscans, and the Etruscans of this epoch; otherwise there is an express contradiction between his sentiments and those of Virgil‡ on the same point of fact, with an express reference to the Romans. As for the Etruscans, they had at all times been most disposed, as an ingenious people, and unremitting in the cultivation of statuary, to become competitors of the Greeks; and in this epoch that competition was carried to it's best success.

Among the sarcophagi collected in the Royal Museum there are not many examples to be cited of the rising progress of this epoch. On one of those sarcophagi, Philoctetes in a cave between Ulysses in a pensive mood and Diomedes, is very striking§. That sarcophagus is not entire, but is much to be admired. Nearer still to the Greek style are the heroes of Thebes, the Mithriacus, the Penthesilea with all her furbelow of dress as in some of the fine sarcophagi at Rome. On those three it is true that there is no Etruscan character incised; but that is no objection, because it

* Hor. Epist. lib. 2. epist. 2.

† Æneid. lib. 6. v. 847—853.

‡ Ibid. lib. 2. epist. 1.

§ Q. Calab. lib. 9. v. 334

is not always found in works still later*; and yet we are certain that the Etruscan character lasted long in Etruria; there are proofs of it on urns of the seventh or eighth age of Rome, and there are medals which shew that in the social war the confederates kept to the ancient writing†. If those works, having no Etruscan inscription, are nevertheless to be ascribed to this epoch, the having that inscription is no objection to others, which may still be reduced to the same period, such as the Pallas in bronze, and the celebrated haranger. The last of these, in particular, has been constantly mistaken and shewn for the produce of a period antecedent to the foundation of Rome, when it is unquestionable that no such expression of nature as is given in that piece of art ever marked the Etruscan works of those early times. And that mistake seems to have been owing to it's having been found in the neighbourhood of the ancient Veii, and to it's having an Etruscan inscription. A very good cast from that haranger may be seen in the Royal Academy at London. If the following be denominated minor works, yet they possess much of this epoch, viz. the Bacchus of the third cabinet grouped with a genius, and the young boy of Signior Corazzi at Cortona, with an Etruscan inscription; on which monument have written the two great antiquarians, Passeri in his *Dissertation on the Columbarian Academy*, and Coltellini in a separate work.

Before we take leave of the Etruscan style, it may not be amiss to make a few remarks on the other ancient schools of Italy, so far as they may appear to interfere with the Etruscan, and which

* Mus. Etrusc. V. 3. tab. 23, 27, &c.

† Thef. Numis. nummi. incert. tab. 1, num. 4.

will best be made in this place, without taking up the subject again when we come to Rome.

It may naturally be conceived from what we have said of the early settlements formed in Italy by the *Ænolian* Pelasgi, that other parts of that country, as well as Etruria, received from those colonists what notions of art they had to communicate, and that those first communications would be increased from time to time as those settlements became more filled from Greece. It will not therefore militate against any thing here advanced, if it be granted that while the spirited ingenuity of Etruria took the lead in cultivated science*, the rest of Italy was not barbarous. Pliny leads us to suppose, that besides the Etruscans there were from the earliest days of Rome artists among the Latins and Volscians employed in ornamental works†. But it is sufficient for the Etruscans to have taken the lead in elegant art; and it is some tribute to that pretension, if the name of Etruscan has been sometimes given indifferently to every ancient work of Italy; nor is there any inconsistency in that, since it has already been observed in these pages, that by the Etruscan we understand a style, and not the country. It was natural for that style, as taking the lead in Italy, to pervade every other school that rose up in it. The Etrurians themselves in very early times settled colonies in Lombardy. And therefore in the cabinets of the king of Naples, of Picenum, of Rome, of Bologna, and of every place throughout Italy, are preserved idols found in those respective territories, the greatest part of which is very like those which have been found in Tuscany. All these can

* *Anc. Univ. Hist.* V. 4. c. 1. sec. 3.

† *Plin. lib.* 35. c. 12.

can hardly be considered as the works of that particular country, and so far they shew more plainly the prevalence of it's school. Yet it would be unnatural and surprizing, if there were not in the works of those other Italian schools certain discriminations from the Etruscan. Those discriminations are actually found, but they detract nothing from the superiority of the latter, while they properly mark the school from which they issued. They do not consist so much in the variation of general character, as in a variation of their respective *costume*, in the cutting of the hair, in the garments, and in the armour. With respect to the fineness of work, nothing that came from any of those other schools, if we except the Roman, appears to have been comparable with what was really Etruscan. And the Roman certainly had considerable pretensions. The statue of Virius, and the mystic chest of Plautius, which carries a more ancient character, shew how much the arts were then advanced in Rome*. A work very like that chest is seen in a patera with a head of Bacchus in the Royal Gallery.

It is well known to the studious in antique art, that Gori has promiscuously ascribed to the Etruscan school the general assemblage of those works which resemble the Etruscan, and which have been found in other parts of Italy. In that formulary there are many among the learned who think that Gori has gone too far, and who disapprove of his ideas as confining to one city, or to one particular part of a country, the great splendor of art, in which all ancient Italy has some right to participate†. The

* Mus. Kirch. V. 2. p. 63.

† See Passeri Lett. Rom. 1. Olivieri, fundazione di Pefaro, p. 27.

same reflections have been passed upon the opinions which allow none but Etruscan vases: and Winckelman in particular, having conceived that pretension to be too exclusive, and to engross too much, has engrafted upon it the pretensions of the Sicilian and Campanian vases*.

It is enough for us to make these observations to the reader, who will pursue them as far as he shall feel himself interested in that research.

It is now proper that we should speak of the architecture of Etruria, which holds the first, and very important, place in the orders of that elegant science.

All the writers on architecture have agreed, that the Etruscans were among the first people in Italy who gave proofs of that branch of art. And some had gone so near to the truth, as to intimate their opinion that the Doric was first in use among the ancient Etrurians†. A little further investigation of the evidence connected with the subject would have shewn them how that opinion, nearly right, but not strictly so, might have been stated with correctness. They would have found, what has been already suggested by us in the preceding volume, that an order, or at least a certain style of building, very much a kin to the Doric, but flouter, and above two hundred years older than that which the Dorians established in Peloponesus, was employed there by the Pelasgi, who built Pisa, and Croton, and other cities in that country, and by Ænomaus the king of Elis, who built a

* Winck. Hist. lib. 3. c. 4.

† Leoni's Alberti, p. 141.

palace there at that great distance of time before the Doric became known as an order*—that in the Etrurian Pisa, Croton, and other towns erected by the same Pelasgi migrating from Greece, monuments of that species of architecture have appeared, as naturally they might be expected—and that those authorities are the more to be depended on, because Pausanias, travelling through Greece, was shewn one of the columns, then carefully preserved as a curiosity, which had made a part of that palace of Cænomaus, and which from it's great affinity to the Doric he thought fit to call by that name†, although it's antiquity was so much greater. Nothing therefore can be more certain, than that the order which took the name of *Tuscan* was that same order or style which had been used in Peloponesus; and that how much soever it might be like the subsequent Doric, it was not that Doric itself, although we must presume that it gave the principles to that Doric, which differed from it of course when it became more dressed than that which had gone before it.

Here therefore we see the Etruscan architecture, like every other branch of Etruscan art, to have been a Grecian style in it's origin, but in it's antiquity prior by some ages to the name of an order in Greece, and taking that name when it passed into the hands of the Etrurians. We see also the reasons why the Etruscan and Doric orders have been so reciprocally taken for each other, and so indistinctly described by authors. Even Vitruvius, telling us of the various manner in which the Tuscan was executed, leaves it almost to be considered as a

* D'Ancarv. V. 2. p. 283. 289. 367.
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† Pausan. lib. 5. c. 20. p. 428.

Doric*. Others have left the same conclusion to be drawn from a general similitude of plainness and strength which characterizes both, and from some proportions which are common to both. Thus it has been no easy matter for respectable writers in architecture to ascertain precisely the distinctions between them. In the amphitheatres of Verona, Pola, Nîmes, and Capua, some have asserted the order to be Tuscan, others have pronounced it to be Doric†. That of Capua was certainly Tuscan below, and Doric in the second order‡. Some have gone so far as to question whether the Tuscan can be considered as a regular order§; or they have looked for the exemplification of it, where it was not to be found; and others, writing professedly of the orders, have passed over the Tuscan||. Some have undertaken to explain more particularly its constitution, but finding no Tuscan ornaments among the antiquities of Rome, they have depended more on the fidelity of their own imagination than on assured authorities**.

What that order is, perhaps we shall be best informed by the Marquis Maffei in his History of ancient Amphitheatres. A more decided view of it, or at least of that composition which had been given to it by time, seems there to have been afforded than had before been obtained even by those who had sought it where beyond dispute it will be found, if any where entire, in the amphitheatres of Verona and Pola, but especially of the former. Scamozzi bestowed some pains on this order, and

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 7. de Tuscanicis generibus.

† Serlio. Palladio. Daviler. San felici. Mazochio. Blondel.

‡ Swinb. V. 4. p. 328.

§ Chambray. Daviler.

|| Alberti.

** Serlio. Philander. Barozzi. Scamozzi.

thought that he had gained the whole of it from the remains of ancient buildings; but he was mistaken, or he would not have put the heads of his beams in his frize. Palladio came nearer to a right source of discovery by taking the counterpoize of the Tuscan architraves, frize, and cornice, from the arena of Verona; but he shewed an architrave without members, a frize without polishing, a cornice with other parts, and the whole with various measures; in consequence he shewed that he had only remarked the two lower stories, which perhaps he suffered himself to mix, and he partly confesses it, with what he had seen in other buildings, and that he had neglected to observe the uppermost story which was most worthy of attention. Indeed the narrowness of the street has principally hindered the building from being viewed to advantage, at least in its higher ornaments. Thus speaks the Marquis Maffei himself*, who goes on to explain the constitution and division of those ornaments, and to correct some mistakes of others who had undertaken to describe them. To that explanation we refer the reader who is desirous to be informed of the Tuscan order, remarking only that its members will there be found very differently divided from those of the other orders, yet not with less symmetry, and certainly with more majestic solidity. Massy strength was its predominant character, and when it appeared in a rustic form, that strength was conceived to be particularly expressed by the roughness, the knobs, and protuberancies of the stone. When brown with age as at Verona, or white with age as at Pola, they acquired a grandeur which became revered. That manner of working, whenever it was pursued, as it was very often

* Pa. 229—233.

in the larger fabrics of antiquity*, was not only a great saving of labour, but was natural to those who thought that structure most compleat which bore most strongly the first features of nature.

Thus built, says Alberti†, the old Italians, partial to that beauty which was obtained by an attention to prudent parsimony, and was found associated with strength and convenience. That style of building, ever since employed where its effect has been preferred to Doric, was the choice of the Etruscans, and was not confined merely to their sepulchres, their labyrinths, and subterraneous structures. It is said, moreover, to have been assisted by many excellent treatises among them, which are now lost, but of which the Romans, deriving probably from those neighbours the first ideas of architecture, must have had the advantage. We are assured that those early documents and examples were followed by the Romans with great emulation, as soon as they were competent to undertake them for themselves; and that taste was never neglected through the whole period of their history, whenever it befitted the situation of their design. The subterraneous monument at Clusium, now Chiusi, in an earlier period, the amphitheatres abovementioned in later ones, and the column of Trajan, as Chambray insists upon it, may serve as great proofs of the justice done by them to the Tuscan order. To those instances we must add the temple built by Tarquin to Jupiter Tarpeius, for which he brought an architect from Etruria‡. That temple was among those which were most admired by Constantius, when he went to Rome§. Whatever por-

* Palladio, p. 104.

† Pa. 114.

‡ Liv. lib. 1.

§ Ammian. Marcel. lib. 16. p. 71.

tions of it's original design might have remained to so distant a period, that design, which we must presume to be Tuscan, must have been grand, and have possessed great merit, to have been admired amidst such temples as those of Venus and of Peace, amidst those structures to which the ages of Adrian and of Vespasian had given birth.

BOOK V.

ANCIENT ROME.

CHAP. I.

Rome indebted to Etruria for her first acquaintance with arts, and for the general formation of her new state, but no evidences of painting there under her kings—not true that she could only obtain figures in clay on Demaratus's arrival in Etruria—equally disputable, that the images of deities in the temples of Italy were of clay or wood before the conquest of Asia—no images, however, of deities for the first one hundred and seventy years of Rome—a view of the Roman republic with respect to it's inclination for the fine arts—the gradual introduction of sculptures in that period—the progress of the pencil in Roman hands, during that time, not much to be esteemed—it's progress in the Empire very poor, and the various causes in the vices both of government and people, which precluded it from rising higher, and finally sunk it by the time of Vespasian—the sculptures of Rome from the close of the republic to be viewed in somewhat a different aspect—those sculptures, and the Roman school, to be considered then as Greek; and although participating in the general causes so adverse to the arts in Rome, yet borne up better and much longer than painting by circumstances peculiarly favourable to themselves—the Greek style very strong under the first Cæsars, and that style illustrated—

affected, however, by some adverse circumstances peculiar to itself, from which it nevertheless revived in the reigns of Titus and Trajan—marked by the epoch of a new taste under Adrian, and what that taste was—another epoch arising to it in a worse manner under Alexander Severus, and what that manner was—it's gradual decline from thence, and the causes which rendered that decline inevitable, until it sunk into barbarism.

ROME must have been considerably indebted to Etruria for her first advancements in ingenious knowledge, let Latium have previously obtained what advantages it might from the communications of Grecian colonists. And the fact is, that to the Etruscans the first Romans owed almost every thing that related to art, every thing that gave ornament, and dignity, the form of office, and in some respects the form of constitution, to their new state. As far as one undivided sovereignty could borrow from a country which was split into many, the Romans in their first and best ages imitated the Etruscans. From Vetulonium they borrowed their *fascēs*, *secures*, *liētores*, *sella curulis*, *prætecta*, &c.* To Etruria they commonly sent their children for education; and that habit continued for some centuries after they had been continually at war with each other†.

In the fine arts, however, as Etruria was nearest to them, so we must expect to find their earliest resources there. And those resources appear to have been sought for the purposes of sculpture only, and architecture. We have no evidences of

* Silius Italic. Punic. lib. 8.

† Cicero de leg. lib. 2. De divinat. lib. 1. Liv. lib. 9. Val. Max. lib. 1. c. 1.

their obtaining or seeking any works of the pencil under their kings.

Are we to take the authority of Pliny, that the Romans could only obtain figures in clay so late as the time of Demaratus the father of Tarquin, because he would lead us to believe that the art of modelling in clay, which precedes statuary and sculpture, was first brought into Etruria, and into Italy in general, by Euechir and Eugrammus at that period? Enough has been said under our view of Etruria to disprove that idea, with respect to that country. And with respect to Latium, it is sufficient to adduce the instance recorded by Plutarch*, who tells us that Romulus carried away from Cameria to Rome a chariot of brass. No matter by whom that chariot was formed, whether by Latins or Etruscans; they who could cast that work of bronze could have cast a statue. Let facts however have their weight. The statue of Jupiter Capitolinus in the time of Tarquinius Priscus was made of clay, and was the work of one Turrianus at Fregellæ in Campani†, where Pliny says that branch of the plastic art was much followed, but still more in Etruria. No conclusion, however, can be drawn from thence, that in either country they could not then go beyond modelling in clay. Nevertheless the fact is explicit in one thing, that the Romans could do little for themselves in that way, when they were beholden to their neighbours even for earthen statues. And why they resorted to their neighbours for such statues, in preference to the art which had produced the chariot of brass at Cameria an hundred years before, must be resolved in that simplicity and æconomy of the age, or

* Vita Romuli.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 12.

that humour of the moment, to which those humbler statues might be more agreeable. So Pliny himself has conceived the fact. Yet we recollect, that on that chariot of brass Romulus placed his own statue crowned by victory, which somewhere or other he had gotten to be executed; and it does not appear very probable, that this emulation would not prompt him to seek from the same skill, which had cast that chariot, a more suitable bronze to fill it. Besides, that simplicity and æconomy, or that humour of the moment, was not always equal in that Tarquin himself, or in his days; for a statue was then erected to Accius Nævius the Augur*, and we should naturally have supposed that it did not surpass in its materials that which was given in the same reign to Jupiter Capitolinus, if Pliny himself had not led us to suspect that it was of bronze, when he tells us† that the base on which it stood, and which was probably of wood, was burnt in the fire which consumed the senate-house, in the front of which it was placed; and it must have been strange that the whole figure did not meet the same fate, if it had not been made of more durable materials. It is true that the statue of Servius Tullius, which was placed in the temple of Fortuna Virilis, and was saved when that temple was afterwards burned, was made of wood; but it was gilded over.

We should therefore be much inclined to suspect the correctness of that assertion, which gives to the Romans, and to the Italians in general, no acquaintance with statuary, or sculpture, or casting, but only with the modelling in clay, so late as the time of Demaratus.

* Liv. lib. 1. c. 5.

† Plin. lib. 34. c. 5. sec. 2.

Pliny has gone much farther, having asserted that the images of deities in the temples of Italy were of clay or wood until the conquest of Asia*. What means this? We are assured that about the year of Rome 246, statues were raised to Horatius Cocles, and to Clelia, for their bravery†; and to Suffetia the Vestal for her gift of the ground called Campus Tiberinus‡. And if we are to take Pliny's own authority concerning these, they were all of bronze; a fact, in which one should think he could not be mistaken, because he says that the statue of Cocles was standing in its place when he wrote. Are we then to believe that the statues of private individuals were of bronze, and that those of deities were of clay or wood? But if the last were so, it is plain at least that it was not for the want of an acquaintance somewhere in the country with the power of casting them in better materials. That author has himself contradicted his own assertion above quoted, when he has told us in another passage, that the first image of a deity in bronze at Rome was that of Ceres in the 267th year of the city§. Whether he has been more correct in the epoch he has fixed for that first bronze-image of a deity, must be left to that conclusion from the authorities above stated, which the judicious reader shall think most proper to be drawn. If he had meant to tell us, that the Romans at that period began to cast in bronze for themselves, that were another matter. It does not appear very probable that they were able to do that for themselves so soon; neither is it probable, on the other hand, from the general complexion of testimonies that they were content with wood or clay for the statues

* Plin. lib. 34. c. 7. sec. 16.

† Plin. lib. 34. c. 60.

‡ Liv. lib. 2.

§ Ibid. lib. 34. c. 4. sec. 9.

of their deities until the conquest of Asia, because they were in no necessity to be so content.

Plutarch says, that the Romans placed no images of their deities in any of their temples for the first one hundred and seventy years of their history ; and that this was in consequence of an ordinance of Numa, who went so far as to forbid them to represent the deity under any created form*.- That account appears extremely probable, as it agrees very much with the character of Numa, and with those notions of religion which he seems to have imbibed, but how it is impossible to say, from the principles of Zoroaster, and which afterwards distinguished the doctrine of Pythagoras, that the supreme first cause can only be conceived by the mind, and that it is impious to represent the divinity by what is human and perishable. This may be the reason why in that early part of the Roman history we meet so few evidences of divine statues, while so many occur at all times which were raised to individuals. That of Jupiter Capitolinus erected by Tarquin the elder had it's date about that distance of time from the foundation of Rome, and was perhaps the first that broke in upon the regulations of Numa, whose simplicity of religion was greatly changed by Tarquin, when he introduced into Rome the superstitions of Etruria, and the mythological divinities of Greece, in opposition not only to that law of Numa, but to another of Romulus which had forbidden the admission of strange gods.

From the whole of those authorities we are warranted to con-

* Plut. in vita Numæ.

clude, that how competent soever to works of sculpture and bronze the Etruscans or Latins might have been, or at what period soever the Romans were first made acquainted with those works, they themselves were not only incompetent to them, but, for aught appears to the contrary, incompetent to the art of modelling, in the regal state; and that it was only towards the close of that state when they began to embrace that mythological religion of the Greeks, which brought into use the statues of divinities.

The republic of Rome opens to us in some respects a different view, yet by no means in its earlier days; for a great part of that period it neither shews the Romans as a people impassioned by elegant art, nor assures us that those arts which appear to have been actually wrought are to be ascribed to the improvements of their own genius.

As at this distance of time we have not before us those authorities which might have led us to decide the point of their ability, we shall judge of that upon very fair evidence, by considering how far their circumstances, and pursuits, and dispositions were then favourable to the cultivation of elegant arts. And in that view their sculpture was as much interested as their painting.

The fact is, through the general course of the republic the senate and magistrates and people of Rome had something else to do than to cultivate arts. Their minds were filled with objects, which afforded a more precious gratification. The delightful work of civilizing the world by enslaving it gave them

business enough. Long before there was a poet to record the first principle of their policy, it had taken possession of their hearts when they had gained the first foot of land which they could call their own :

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento :
Hæ tibi erunt artes ; pacique imponere morem,
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.

VIRG. *ÆN.* lib. 6. v. 847.

Arms were their purpose, their study, and their pleasure. To add to the triumphs of the Roman eagle was beyond all the arts of the world. The description which Plutarch has given us of that republic, as relative to this point of discussion, is most just and true. “ Full of arms taken from barbarous nations, and of
“ bloody spoils, and crowned as she was with trophies and
“ other monuments of her triumphs, she afforded a most severe
“ and awful spectacle. One might then have stiled her (to use
“ the expression of Pindar) the temple of frowning Mars”—not the seat of the graces or the arts. As to them, Plutarch continues, “ Rome neither had nor knew any curiosities of the kind,
“ but was a stranger to the charms of taste and elegance unto
“ the time of Marcellus*. Till he placed some of those charms before the Romans, there was not, as he himself told them, an idea in their minds competent to receive them.

If in any individuals there appeared a vanity of possessing those works of art, it was seen merely in the train of their greater passion for conquest. That passion afforded them a

* Plut. vita Marcelli.

double gratification ; for while it fed their national ambition, it put them in the way of acquiring those treasures of art, which became an additional ostentation to the private man. Those generous civilizers no sooner reduced a country than they bereft it of all the produce of its ingenious elegance, which was swept away to Rome, where there was not an eye to see, nor a taste to feel, its perfections. Nay, there was a furlyness, at times, in the reception of those works of art, as tending to subdue or soften the determined habits of their martial character. The graver citizens beheld them, as the graver Spartans beheld the first introduction of Asiatic gold, fearing the ruin of their country, and yet unwilling to part with them, when once they were beheld. This was remarkably verified in the case of Marcellus himself.

Yet, notwithstanding that rigidity in superiors, some leaders of foreign expeditions were not discouraged from the hope of making their way to popular favour by presenting to their countrymen those rare curiosities of human ingenuity. And thus Rome began to obtain from collections what she was not likely to gain from the genius of her own people. The splendor of triumphs overcame the narrowness of principle, and through that medium in process of time all the best treasures of arts, which had enriched Greece, Macedon, and Sicily, together with the sculptures of Carthage, became ornaments of the temples and public edifices of Rome, yielding to the rapines of Mummius, Fulvius Nobilior, Æmilius, Marcellus, Scaurus, and Scipio.

“ Then, says Plutarch*, they began to talk about arts and

* Vita Marcelli.

“artists.” That talk only became a new instigation to the views of collecting, or to speak more properly, of plundering; it led for a long time to no improved knowledge, it supplied no ambition of taste, although the hands of private individuals became filled by degrees with the productions of Grecian excellence. In general, they estimated what they possessed with no more sense than Mummius*, who looked at most to the value at which the article was put. But Agrippa strove to carry those habits to a wiser and more useful end: in his celebrated speech soon after the close of the republic he recommended it as an ordinance, that the works of art possessed by individuals should be devoted to the public use in some public repositories, for the improvement of those who meant to prosecute the arts, and for the admiration and pleasure of all. It is remarkable that Agrippa was the first and last of all the Romans who thought such a regulation worthy of their attention. At that time, and long afterwards, those ancient collections in the hands of individuals formed the *Pinacothecæ* spoken of by Varro, Petronius, and Pliny; that is, the picture-rooms of their private houses, set apart for the repast of their eyes; on which no doubt their eyes would after a while feed as often as a man enjoys a fine prospect on which he is accustomed to look from every window of his house. Others, however, had very little chance of deriving from thence either benefit or pleasure.

If those collections of individuals were not so disposed of as Agrippa recommended, the Roman pride had long before that time taken that method for its own gratification in some new

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

devices of art ; and in those devices we are to behold one of the first encouragements given by the Romans to the arts ; although we should be very hasty if we concluded that those works were their own. We now speak of the shields or bucklers, on which were expressed the characters or likenesses of those, for whom they were made, their ancestors, and their families, especially such of them as had been distinguished by any signal deeds*. These were suspended in some consecrated or public building, more frequently than in the mansions of their owners, for the perpetuating of their names and their blood. And this custom, taking its rise with M. Claudius about the year of Rome 259, which was in the first days of the republic, and being afterwards followed by M. Æmilius, became a growing call on the ingenuity which was employed on those shields through all the imperial ages.

It was but a few years before the point of time, in which that custom commenced, that the statues of Cocles, Clelia, and Suffetia, of which we have already spoken, were raised in bronze ; and for those statues there can hardly be room to question that the Romans had recourse to some foreign artists. In these instances, however, we see the openings of their attention to arts and to those who possessed them. The veneration of their deities, the mysteries of their religion, the rites of Bacchus, and the various habits of Etruscan piety gradually becoming their own, were so many new subjects for the exercise of ingenuity in statues, and bas-reliefs, and mystic chests, and urns, which inevitably raised the study of sculpture among the Romans, and

formed by degrees a kind of school in the arts. We may consider that school, if so we may be allowed to call it, as beginning to shew itself in the second epoch which gave advancement to the Etruscan school. And in the third and best epoch of that neighbouring school the Romans shewed, that how slow or late soever had been the influences of taste upon their minds, the advantages of having such elegant neighbours had not been lost upon them, and that they were only second to the Etruscans in Italy. Towards the close of the republic we may look upon the Roman school as rising into respectable character, of which we have already given some suggestions in our view of Etruria.

We may follow the pencil with much the same course of observation which has been bestowed on sculpture, in the Roman republic, and arising precisely from the same causes. Till the days of Fabius, surnamed *Pictor* from his having taken up the pencil, not a trait is given us of any one Roman who might pass for a painter*. No doubt, Fabius could not acquire the art without masters or examples; both of which he might probably have from Etruria, if not from Greece. However, the surname by which he was so remarkably distinguished, conveys some suspicion that his profession was not very common, or that it had not been sustained with much character by others before him. But when was it that Fabius exhibited his talents in the temple of health? So late as the year of Rome 450; in the latter days of Apelles; in the same year in which Demetrius raised the siege of Rhodes, sparing Protogenes and his Ialysus. And what was his merit in his favourite art? Valerius Maximus has

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

dropped an expression, which does not represent it very favourably. He says, “ *qualemcunque illum laborem suum silentio* “obliterari noluit. Fabius was unwilling that the labour of his “pencil, *such as it was*, should pass unnoticed”. If this is not a direct sneer upon his painting, certainly it is not the way in which one would speak of acknowledged talents. Pliny himself has left no observations on the merit of those paintings, although he says that they continued down to his own memory: but that could only have been when he was very young, and of course less able to judge, because they were burnt with the temple of health in the reign of Claudius.

The same passage of Valerius Maximus, when quoted entire, will give us light on a more important point, while it accounts very well not only for the inferiority of Fabius’s paintings, but for the general inferiority of the Roman pencil in that age. It decides the contempt in which the pencil was then held, as a profession in Rome. The whole passage, to which we have referred, stands thus. “ *Quid tibi voluit C. Fabius, nobilissimus* “*civis, cum in æde Salutis parietes pinxisset? Sordido studio* “*deditum ingenium qualemcunque illum laborem suum silentio* “*obliterari noluit.*” Cicero in his Tusculan Questions, speaking of the same Fabius, shews the same general disesteem of the painter’s profession, when Fabius lived. “ *An censemus, si Fabio* “*nobilissimo homini laudatum esset quod pingeret, non multos* “*etiam apud nos Polycletos et Parrhasios fuisse?*” In this passage, which at first sight may seem to admit of more constructions than one, although there is only one that can be consistent with the argument, the reason why Fabius gained no applause was not because his paintings might not deserve it, nor because his prac-

tice might be considered by the proud Romans as below his rank, but because the profession of the painter had then no admirers among that people. For thus the argument stands: "Can we believe that if there had been a public in Rome to applaud and patronize Fabius, when he took up the pencil, we should not have seen an emulation arising, which would have produced a Polycletus and Parrhasius in many individuals among ourselves"?

There was therefore neither taste, nor encouragement, nor esteem for the pencil at Rome in the year 450. At the distance of another century Pacuvius the poet appeared with the pencil, as well as with the pen, in his hand*. He painted the temple of Hercules in the forum boarium. Perhaps he had more merit as a painter than Fabius; or we may suppose that the age had arrived to more judgement; or perhaps his tragic fame, which was deservedly high, might procure favour to his other talent. It is certain, however, that his success as a painter was greater than that of Fabius.

Pliny has remarked, that after the time of Pacuvius the pencil was no longer beheld *in honestis manibus, in the hands of respectable men*; combining, as we should apprehend, if Pliny had duly considered the matter, the respectability of professional character with that of personal situation: and in that case the further instances which he has left to us will be consistent with his language. Antistius Labeo had been prætor, and also proconsul in Gaul, and he lived long enough to see some emperors,

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

although he never troubled himself with public affairs after the Empire commenced; but his paintings were so trifling, merely in miniature, and solely for his private amusement, that it is sufficient to say of him, he could paint*. Arellius, who lived at the close of the republic, was not an obscure man, unless his art obscured him; but that was so debased to the views of debauchery, that it was not worthy to be named†. Q. Pedius was grandson of him who was appointed along with Augustus coheir to Cæsar the dictator; but little could be said of his art beyond its importance to his own enjoyment of society, as he was born dumb; and happily for himself he died young‡.

These instances, connected with the assertion of Pliny which has been mentioned, afford but a faint and feeble view of the Roman pencil during the republic. And yet it is certain that in that period, after the age of Pacuvius, greater performances were attempted, which appear to have succeeded in popular favour. The reader must determine for himself, how far he shall reconcile with those greater attempts that assertion of Pliny, which seems to demand the sense we have given to it, in order that it may be reconciled with the instances already adduced; or whether he shall choose to reconcile the whole by supposing that those greater attempts in the art were obtained from Grecian masters; or, lastly, whether he shall conclude that Pliny has spoken too hastily, let his words be construed as they may, and that those performances which we are going to mention may be considered as the effects of maturing time, and of growing skill, among the Romans themselves. The facts, to which

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

† Ibid. cap. 10.

‡ Ibid. cap. 4.

we allude, are these. In* the year of Rome 490, M. Valerius Maximus, the first Messala, returning from his expedition displayed to the public the picture of his victory over the Carthaginians. In the year 562, L. Scipio on the like occasion exhibited a painting of his victory in Asia. In the year 605, L. Hostilius Mancinus gained the people over to him by the like representation of his siege of Carthage. And in the year 653 Claudius Pulcher, entertaining the Roman people with plays, was the first who decorated the theatre with various painted scenes forming agreeable deceptions, by which even birds were allured to take them for real objects. Let those paintings have been executed by whom they might, one thing is plain, that at least the attention of the Romans became more awakened to paintings, as well as to sculpture, towards the close of the republic.

So far, however, as concerns those deceptions, we must not be led to infer that the pencil had reached many accomplishments in that period. Monsieur Perrault has rightly argued concerning the deceptions of the Greek artists, which have been so much spoken of, that they were no proofs of consummate art. We mean not, if Perrault did, to appreciate the talents of Greek painters, or even of Roman ones, by those sorts of works, nor to argue that they must all have come from ordinary hands; because some are known to have been done by the first names, and it is likely enough that the best painters, as well as humble ones, might occasionally do such things in a *jeu d'esprit*, which seems to have been the general cause which gave

* Plin. lib. 35. cap. 4.

them birth. It is sufficient to insist that no considerable talents were necessary to produce them. The fact is, that such deceptions have generally been found among the earlier efforts of the pencil in any country; and they have been seen as strong under the coarsest pencils, which have been incapable of executing any thing in any other way, as when the first masters have condescended to produce them. Of this the many deceptions in painting, which surprize us in the ordinary gardens of entertainment around London, are proofs which leave no doubt. Any man, who first beholds them, shall think they are the real meats in the shop of the poulterer, butcher, or confectioner, and probably he will be as eager to take hold of them as birds were to peck the grapes painted by Zeuxis, as Zeuxis himself was to draw aside the fictitious curtain of Parrhasius, or as the crows were to light on the tiles painted in the scenes of Claudius Pulcher. In modern ages, when the theory of light and shade has been so much extended and refined, no artist would ever boast of his capacity in such deceptions; because he knows that they require no greater skill than that which can give the local object in its genuine hues on a plain surface, without any intervention of aerial perspective or foreshortening. No use of a shaded back-ground can throw out that object more strongly natural and simple than a plain surface, if it be merely the purpose of the artist to produce a strong and simple deception. And we have little doubt that those examples, which so much attracted the ancients in this way, were so effected; because, in a very imperfect state of the arts, the attraction produced by them on common eyes, and on scientific ones too, is not superseded by any scrutiny into the plainness with which they are done. When they are accompanied with a refined execution of

subject, and flow from a masterly hand, they seem to constitute all that the man of taste desires; and yet, even then, the artist would hardly consent to rest his character and talents in design on the happiness of the deception.

No wonder therefore that the Romans were delighted with those deceptions, which must have surprized them the more, as theatrical scenes were new to them, and as they had been little acquainted with the comprehensive powers of the pencil. But we may be sure that those paintings commissioned by Claudius Pulcher and the others were not of superior execution, if they were Roman. This will be fully decided by the state of the Roman pencil in the following age, when it may naturally be supposed, after the encouragements of such repeated admiration, to have advanced rather than to have sunk. Of its condition in that succeeding period we have the compleatest evidence. And we shall only observe further as to the republic, that it does not look as if the painters of Rome had been much sought in greater works, when two Greek painters Damophilus and Gorgasus were sent for and employed in the temple of Ceres*; and also when Diogenes the Athenian was employed in the Pantheon by Agrippa†, who certainly did not want a disposition to patronize his own countrymen.

When the republic was dissolved and lost in the empire, one should have thought that as the roughness and severity of the former gave way to the softer and more elegant habits of the latter, as literature and science also stood then at the highest,

* Plin. lib. 55. c. 12.

† Ibid. lib. 36. c. 5.

and as sculpture itself unquestionably then felt its growth, so the attractions of the pencil would have been cultivated in the same degree with every other elegance. That they were not so cultivated is plain from this single circumstance, that Pliny, whose object was to give every credit to Rome on this topic, and therefore to make known the talents of those who had been most respectable in this art, has not named to us above seven or eight painters from the Augustan age to that of Vespasian. That he had no difficulty of knowing every artist, who had maintained any pretensions to character in Rome within the space of fourscore years, is beyond question; and that he would at least not pass over the best, is as little to be doubted. That so few appeared, worthy of being mentioned by him, in all that length of time, is proof enough that there was but little encouragement, and therefore little emulation, in that branch of art among the Romans, without taking into consideration the precise merits of those whose names have been handed down to posterity.

Yet we shall doubtless be better satisfied, when we see who those artists were, and what was their measure of character, which the care of history has left us to contemplate.

Besides Antistius Labeo, Arellius, and L. Pedius, who have been mentioned as existing in the first days of the empire, but without any portions of character, Ludius was much in vogue in the time of Augustus for his painting on walls the figures and common scenes of nature*. He was original in fresco-painting at Rome. And his talents, or his attempts, appear to have been

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

in much compass. No other artist of that age stands upon equal ground with him in the extent and variety of his pencil. But what glory could he gain, if he were not encouraged? And why should he not be encouraged, if he were eminent? That he painted on walls would have been no bar to his success, had there been no other; or the Romans must have been extremely cool to have denied themselves the works of an eminent man, because perchance a fire might sometime or other consume them. Fabullus had the patronage of Nero, in whose house of gold his paintings were carefully incarcerated*. And what was the artist? A solemn, and formal, and florid painter of low subjects. That emperor himself, as Suetonius† tells us, had studied the arts both of painting and modelling. And what was the taste which resulted from that study? To have his picture, if Pliny is not mistaken in speaking of it as a picture, drawn one hundred and twenty feet high‡. We find the pencil in the hands of a freedman of that emperor, who was employed by him to fill the porticos of Antium with his works. And what were those works? The combats of ruffian gladiators, and their portraits, together with those of the rabble who attended them, drawn from the life§. In the time of Vespasian two other Romans were employed to decorate with their pencils the temples of Virtue and Honour repaired by that emperor. These were Cornelius Pinus and Accius Priscus, of whom it is said that the latter came nearest to the manner of the ancients||. Farther than that observation we have none concerning their merits. But of those we are not permitted to entertain a very high opinion, when Pliny

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

† Vita Neronis.

‡ Plin. ibid. cap. 7.

§ Ibid. c. 7.

|| Ibid. cap. 10.

has not excepted them from his general declaration committed to writing perhaps immediately after their works were finished, that "the art was dying"*.

In this account, or in any other which may be collected from history, we have no reason to believe that the Roman pencil ever stood higher than it did in the Augustan age. And we have some further testimonies, which will shew us precisely what was the state of its colouring in that age, if from thence we may carry an inference to the state of its design. Cicero says, "the modern paintings of Rome are florid and shining; they possess a splendor of colouring, which was not found in the works of ancient masters (the Greeks), whose colours were rather austere and subdued. But those modern pieces, which strike the eye so strongly at first, are not able to detain our admiration long; they soon surfeit the beholder, and quickly nauseate†". Vitruvius in the same age makes the same observation in other words, but more explicitly pointed. He says, "the Roman painters of his day endeavoured to accomplish by the glare of excessive colouring what the ancients (the Greeks) reached by actual study and genius. Vermilion, purple, chryfocollum, arminium, which catch the eyes with intense glare, and which the ancients hardly ever touched, were used with infinite profusion‡". But Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who was brought up at Rome, and in the time of Augustus, although he was a Greek by birth, carries his observations on the Roman paintings of that period not only to the

* Plin. lib. 35. cap. 5.

† Cic. de. Oratore. lib. 3. c. 25.

‡ Vitruv. lib. 7. c. 5.

defects of their colouring but to those of their design. “ The
 “ ancients, (says he) meaning the Greeks, were great designers,
 “ who perfectly understood all the grace and force of expres-
 “ sion, although their colours were few and simple: but the
 “ moderns, whose labour is spent in colours and in shading, do
 “ but design indifferently, and never treat the passions with suc-
 “ cess*”.

If those writers saw those imperfections of Roman paintings in the Augustan age, then we know what must have been the sentiments both of prince and people concerning their own artists; and we shall receive as authentic what is to be gathered from history concerning the measures which were taken in that age, at least in the Imperial palace, to obtain those gratifications from the works of the pencil, which the pencils of Rome could not communicate. Those measures were not more curious in themselves than they are worthy of our knowledge, as they become collateral testimonies with those already adduced, that the Roman pencil never had any thing to boast of even in the most favourable of Imperial days.

That under those circumstances Augustus, and they who succeeded him, should take up the plan of collecting from Greece what paintings were to be obtained, will not appear surprizing, for other reasons than that of following the example of Cæsar, who had gained the two celebrated pictures of Ajax and Medea by Timomachus, for the purpose of placing them in the temple of Venus†. So far Augustus was fortunate at once in obtaining

* Dionys. Halicar. In Isæo.

† Plin. lib. 25. c. 4. & 11.

some of the best works of Apelles*, of Niciast†, and Philochares‡, some of which were devoted to the like public consecration. Tiberius got possession of some others §; and with others** again Vespasian adorned his Temple of Peace.

But what became of the Roman vanity, and indeed of its honourable ambition, all that while? What was to become of those great and momentous events, of which the Roman history was full, and especially those in which the prince on the throne, who had founded the empire, was so much interested? These could never be benefited by any collections from Greece, nor eternized to the contemplating eyes of posterity without a pencil. In Rome there was none to give them that eternity, and in Greece there was none in it's first sublimity. What was to be done? They must make the best of the valuable treasures they possessed. And why, the impatient prince would say, why may not Grecian stories, by similarity of application, be construed into Roman events? *Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*††. A Roman poet thus furnished the key, and the Roman emperors used it to unlock those deeper senses more flattering to themselves or their country, veiled under Grecian scenes, which the artists never once had in their thoughts. This gave a new and more refined spur to the desires of collecting from Greece, at any expence, those pieces at least which might thus be brought into contact

* The Venus Anadiomene. Castor and Pollux. Alexander victorious—and Alexander triumphant.

† The Hyacinthus. Nemæa.

‡ A young man and his aged father.

§ The Archigallus by Parrhasius.

** The Ialyfus by Protogenes. A hero by Timanthes, and many others. See Aul. Gell. lib. 5. c. 21.

†† Horace.

with Roman views. And if there be a circumstance in history, which shews convincingly the poverty of the Roman pencil, and the impossibility, we may say, of obtaining from it in those days any considerable effort, it is this to which we now allude, and of which we shall give the clearest assurance.

In the state-room of the Imperial palace were placed by Augustus, in a most conspicuous situation, two celebrated pictures by Apelles; one, "Alexander victorious;" the other, "Alexander in triumph, the image of war having his hands tied behind him*." It will not much interrupt us, if we just remark in this place as a point of curiosity, that there can be no doubt but Virgil had before him the last of those pictures, when he thus gave the description of war in the *Æneid* lib. 1. v. 291.

"Diræ ferro et compagibus altis

"Claudentur belli portæ. Furor impius intus

"Sæva sedens super arma, et centum vinctus ahenis

"Post tergum nodis, fremet horridus ore cruento."

more especially when Servius, speaking expressly of that picture, and where it hung, has used Virgil's words, "furor sedens super arma, æneis vinctus, eo habitu quo poeta dixit." Now Dion Cassius† shall be our authority, that the object of Augustus in placing those pictures there was to tell posterity this compliment to himself; "that it was by victory he came to empire." If we couple the first line, which introduces the above passage from Virgil, with the peculiar description of war in the picture, copied at the close of that passage, we shall see clearly the sentiment

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4. & 10.

† Lib. 51. p. 459.

which then prevailed, particularly in the poet's mind, that those pictures applied, or were meant to apply, to the history of Augustus, whose fortune had enabled him to close the civil wars in the empire, and literally to "shut the temple of Janus."

But there is more yet to be known. Claudius, though not the immediate successor of Augustus, shewed pretty clearly that such was the object of his predecessor, by doing what could not decently have been done by Augustus himself. In fidelity to the views of that emperor, but in treachery to Apelles, and in the murder of his pictures, he cut out the head of Alexander from both, and inserted that of Augustus*. The allegory then became in both what it was so much wanted to be, a Roman piece, and in all the perfection of painting, in spite of the imbecillity of Roman pencils, unless what was probably too visible in the heads that were inserted. For we are told that when the lower part of the Venus Anadiomene, which was placed in the temple of Cæsar, had become injured by time, there was not found in Rome an artist bold enough to re-touch it†. And that must have been as early as the reign of Claudius at least, because in the next reign of Nero, the wood, on which the picture was drawn, became totally decayed; and that emperor substituted another Venus for it, newly painted by the hand of Dorotheus‡. Alas! what must that picture have been, to fill the place of the first?

But those were not single instances of the endeavours that were used to obtain from Grecian paintings that gratification to Imperial views, which could not be had from Roman artists. Ni-

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

icias had painted in great vigour "Nemæa sitting upon a lion, bearing a palm-branch in her hand; an old man with a staff standing by her; and over her head a chariot of victory pendant*." The idea was regular, and fine, and plain enough in Greece, with the admission of personifying a town or spot by a human figure. Nemæa was a town in Peloponesus, to which belonged a forest called by its own name, where Hercules killed a lion which ravaged that part of the country, and in commemoration of whose service were instituted the Nemæan sports known all over Greece by the name of "Sacra Nemæa." The picture therefore was easily apprehended by the Greeks as a record of gratitude to Hercules, who had liberated their country from the monsters which infested it, so that the aged leaning on their staffs might pass in security. But it must have been in extreme necessity that Augustus could have sought from so distant an allusion a compliment to himself, as the modern Hercules of the world, who had delivered it from the monsters of war that disturbed its peace. And yet such was the view with which he devoted that picture of Nicias, along with the two others of Apelles, to the great hall or state-room of the palace†.

But if the pencils of Rome could not properly describe those great and historic views, which were so near to the mind of that emperor, surely they might have given him a portrait, and have saved him the trouble of seeking a companion to the Nemæa, which in another way would carry a like complimentary allusion to himself. He wished to immortalize the personal likeness which he was pleased to conceive that he bore to Cæsar his fa-

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

† See Hardouin's Notes on Pliny, lib. 35. ad loc.

ther by adoption. But that, it seems, could not be done so well to his satisfaction as by adopting a picture of Philochares, which gave “ the portraits of a young man and his aged father, very much “ alike in features, with the difference only of their ages, and re- “ presented above them an eagle carrying a dragon in its tal- “ ons*.” What it was that introduced this last idea into the composition of that picture, we are unable to conjecture. It has come down to us, that the two figures were those of Glaucio and Aristippus his son, two private friends and countrymen of the painter. No doubt, the allegory was private to their own transactions in Greece. It was a fortunate one, however, for the vanity of Augustus. “ The Roman eagle, or the Roman virtue, “ had extinguished the serpents of discord, by the extinction of “ the civil wars.” And what signified the privacy or obscurity of the original characters in the picture? Their names would presently be lost; and his courtiers and people would entail on it the grateful flattery, that it presented to their eyes the immortal Julius Cæsar and his nephew, the latter most happily resembling his illustrious relation not only in features, but in the stronger lines of character, and enjoying Imperial honours by the same means of the eagle which his great uncle had pursued. Here therefore was a choice companion to the Nemæa; and so they were placed together, not in a temple where their new beauties would be seen rarely or darkly, and whose hallowed walls would take from the veneration with which he wished their allegories to be contemplated, but in the most public part of the palace, where they might be seen every day by the Roman knights and the people, by every eye that entered†.

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 4.

† See Hardouin's Notes on Pliny, lib. 35. ad loc.

These circumstances shew very plainly at how low an ebb the pencil stood in the most favourable days which it ever saw in Imperial Rome. And there is another circumstance not unworthy of being mentioned, which equally illustrates the same fact: I mean a spurious kind of painting which was then adopted, and with which both artists and their employers were better pleased; as it will always happen that inferior taste in a people, or inferior talents in professors, and much more when both those meet together, will strive to bring into vogue such lower productions of art as lie more level to their attainments. The practice, to which we allude, was that of painting on stone or marble in smaller portions, and combining many pieces of these so as to form a whole, and give the representation intended. This was distinguished by the name of Mosaic, and it left indeed some place to the pencil, but a very humble one, and such as bereft it of most of its perfections. For although that Mosaic was exercised with much ingenuity, and for a long time in Imperial Rome*; although it be now brought to great perfection in modern Rome, for the copying of historical pieces; and although it be of great utility, as it can stand the damp in churches and other buildings where the air is hardly ever rarified; yet it is impossible to express with pieces of stone and a vitrified matter, used by the ancients for painting in Mosaic, all the excellencies which the pencil of a skilful artist can call forth on the canvas. It is but, after all, a means of copying with surer preservation designs which have been drawn; not the means by which great original designs have been given to the world.

* The age of Aurelian, which could exhibit nothing worthy of attention from the pencil, produced a very fine specimen of Mosaic, in the house of the Tetrici at Rome.

Before we close our view of the Roman pencil, it may be proper to answer a question which may possibly be asked with respect to the remains of ancient Roman paintings, the produce as it should seem of Imperial days, which the zeal of discoverers has rescued from ruins, and which have been transmitted to us by prints and engravings. It may be said, are there none of those remains which shew the painters of those days to have been possessed of considerable powers? Have not many of those remains been admired and studied by some of the first characters in modern art? This may be granted without impeaching any thing laid down in the preceding pages, or conceding any excellencies to the painters of Imperial Rome. For almost the whole of those remains may reasonably be supposed from their style, if not from their subjects, to have been copies from Grecian sculptures or bas-reliefs. Those which have been published by Dr. Turnbull appear strongly to have been such copies, except perhaps three or four out of the whole, such as the first, second, third, and seventeenth, denominated "the figure of Rome," that of "Venus," "Augustus giving the crown," and the "Coriolanus." Still it must remain undetermined, whether they were done by Roman or Greek artists, the latter of whom were at all times employed by the emperors, and by the great men of Rome. Those paintings also were done for the most part in grotesque, that is, in grottos and subterraneous apartments, which were very common in the gardens of Rome and in the country, for the purpose of baths, or of cool retirement and solace. Now there might be among Roman artists many good copyists, although but few that were equal to original design; and their pencils might serve very well in those situations.

We are now enabled to see the grounds of those strong assertions which we meet with in Roman authors, and by which we are in fact forbidden to look upon the Roman pencil as ever having flourished, or produced any eminent work. For if it did not flourish in the earlier periods of the empire, most certainly it never flourished at all. Cicero declares that “painting was in contempt*.” So early as Claudius it is asserted by Petronius, that “the fine arts are perished, and painting has not left any vestige of itself†.” In the time of Vespasian, Pliny pronounces that “the art was dying; sloth had destroyed it; it was in absolute contempt; not one good picture was produced‡.” By the general suffrage of writers every thing drooped considerably after the reign of Augustus. Seneca makes long lamentations on that subject. And Tacitus groans over it continually.

It will be no improper discussion, and will wind up very consistently our inquiry into the state of the Roman pencil, if we subjoin to what has already been set forth those moral causes which precluded it from reaching a higher character, and actually depressed it's growth, at a period which one should have thought most likely to carry it to an elevation. In this discussion indeed we shall find those causes which lay heavy on the progress of elegant art in general, and without the knowledge of which we cannot see completely the subject in which we are engaged, nor even account to our satisfaction for some of those circumstances which have been adduced in evidence, and whose existence we cannot question.

* Cicero quart. orata in Verrem.

† Petron. Satyric. p. 422. Ed. Burm.

‡ Plin. lib. 35. cap. 2. 4. 5. 7.

The first cause, which marks the character of the Romans in those days, is an excessive voluptuousness. Petronius has urged this cause in the gravest manner, as affecting their progress in the arts. He says, "we who are sunk in wine and debauchery dare not even make ourselves acquainted with the arts which have been brought to our hands; all that we study to learn or teach is vice*." Wine and debauchery have had their influence in all places, and even in the best periods of a people. In Greece such things were, at the very time when genius and taste were highest, and when all the powers of the arts were in their richest display. In our own country have the fine arts found their growth among a people who know nothing of wine and debauchery? Where then is the difference of circumstance, by which those things checked the progress of the arts in Imperial Rome, and were incapable of affecting their progress in Greece?

The answer will be found in that distinction which must be admitted when we speak of those corruptions. There is a systematic depravity, amounting to a kind of brutality in those indulgences, which enervates all the powers of the mind, and swallows up the character. And there is, on the other hand, a more delicate and reserved addiction to those indulgencies, which leaves to the character all the opportunities of its natural progress. The former very often derives its fixed habits, if not from the direct lures, at least from the lulling hand, of civil government, which unquestionably has in its power to controul very much, if not strictly to model, the manners of a people. When

* Petron. Satyric. *ibid.*

this is the case, and that civil government becomes so corrupt or so enervating in its spirit, then all enterprize of talents is most likely to be lost in the completion of sottish stupidity, and mere animal vagrancy.

Look then to the difference in government and manners between Greece and Imperial Rome, at least in the earlier part of the Imperial days, as they respectively appear through the medium of those corruptions.

In the former, when you find those corruptions, you find them to be the ebullitions of momentary passions in more private situations, consequently less offending to order, and less contaminating in their influence. You find them not only controuled by the voice of government, but sedulously watched by a police, which did not foolishly mean to eradicate those excesses, but more wisely to keep them within the preservation of a better character. You find that better character actually preserved, an attention to what became them as civilized men, a cultivation of that genius by which they were distinguished on the earth, a cautiousness of sinking into that emasculation which dishonours and destroys the manly character, by keeping up a system of gymnastic hardiness, yet without teaching ferocity. You find a people, whose main ambition with very few exceptions was to be great at home; who were in a constant call to defend themselves there against foreign invasions or internal commotions; who never knew the perilous security of having nothing to fear, or the corrupting influence of rapid and enormous wealth flowing from foreign conquest. When therefore they gave into wine and debauchery, they gave into them not as men

that were lost, nor as men that forgot what it became them to support. They bent as the bow for a time, but soon to become straight again. If they flumbered in intoxication, or in the arms of a Phryne, they awoke to proper consideration. And if Phryne from the fulness of her coffers, the produce of their lavish contributions, had the effrontery to offer the re-building of Thebes, they had too much reflexion to sacrifice their characters to their dalliance, or to let it pass through the world by such a monument that they gloried in their debaucheries. So stands in the pages of history the fair account between voluptuousness and elegant art in Greece.

Turn now to Imperial Rome. You see a people mad with conquest, territory, and wealth—succeeding by these to an excess of enjoyment, in exchange for that excess of frugality which their plainer forefathers had generally pursued—broken into the knowledge of the most miscreant defolation of duty, order, ties, and feelings, by the practices of a late triumvirate, which had left nothing in the human mind, or in the order of society, to be valued—bought, absolutely bought afterwards, to move in the trammels of their corruptors, and invited by continual largesses to the ideas of unlimited self-indulgence; while they were led, by seeing all things put up to auction, to renounce all preference of characters but for those who would gratify the most. You see the extent of provinces, or in other words the extent of the earth, ransacked to supply the luxuries of one appetite*, and

* Take one instance for many. A scarce fish of four pounds and a half in weight was sold for five thousand sesterces, forty pounds seven shillings and three pence halfpenny English money. Immense sums were paid for a good cook, as well as for a delicate dish. See Millot's *Anc. Hist.* Vol. 2. p. 155.

the caprices of human viciousness selected, studied, and extended to satisfy the abominations of another. You see the rage for whoredom rising so high, that severities on celibacy were in danger of producing rebellion. You see laws ordained for the suppression of vice and immorality treated as hypocritical affectations, and defeated too at the same hour by the general system of the power which ordained them*. You see a people, together with their rulers, exhibiting one common appearance as men who had nothing to fear, and too much to enjoy; wanton therefore in dissipation, and abandoned to sensual extravagance. They bathed, they eat and drank, and they bathed again: the night came, when the powers of mind and body were equally exhausted in the brothel: after full meals of infamy, they slept in torpitude; they rose as cripples; and each succeeding day became as the former. If Cicero's principle be true, that "honos alit artes", why should it not be true in every sense of *honour*, as *the scope of action*, as well as its *reward*? And then in such paths of dishonour so systematically pursued, how could the arts of enlightened genius and elegant taste find room to thrive, or any settled place for encouragement?

The next cause that is marked in history as destructive to the arts of Rome is sloth. *Defidia* is in the mouths of all the authors of those times, as contributing *artes perdere*. This cause springs indeed of course from the former. If the vigour of the mind be consumed in vice, it must sink in listlessness to every thing else. And how piteous is the figure of a people sinking under such an

* When the Lex Papia Poppæa appeared, both the consuls, under whose administration it passed, were themselves obnoxious to its penalties. What a burlesque on reform! See Millot's Anc. Hist. Vol. 2. p. 142, 143.

apathy of glory, while every thing that constitutes their situation would invite them to the feelings of true greatness? The Romans found every thing they could desire brought ready to their hands; their empire formed, their families raised, their coffers filled, their unmeasurable enjoyments awaiting their embrace. They took them; they fed till they were glutted; and they waited only for the return of appetite to be glutted again. The great deeds of their forefathers, by which they were thus provided to satiety, were not in their care, nor in their thoughts. They did not look to the necessity of copying the martial glory of past days; and they left to chance the consideration of obtaining an honourable memorial on the earth.

Yet the most dissipated and indolent habits will have in their train some passions, as favourite and needful retainers, which are commonly the reverse of those habits. Avarice therefore, by whose returns the predominant habits might be fed, took that place, and became the third cause which impeded the arts. Marble and gold, precious stones, and precious metals, were intrinsic in their value, and constant in the demands of the world, whether there was a genuine taste for arts in the country or not; or they made the art, which was ever so poorly employed on them, more valuable still. While therefore the eyes were entertained with these, which gratified them more suitably to their apprehension, the heart was fed by the possession of what were considered to be a treasure that would never be lost. Thus the genuine arts of elegance were only made secondary, at best. It was no longer the value of the ingenuity, but the value of the material, that was coveted. It was not the transmission of genius or taste to posterity that was regarded, but the specific worth of the sub-

ance which would descend to the heir. It was not the preservation even of a portrait, which might reasonably be counted dear, that was so much studied as the assurance of having preserved in other substance those dearest of all the portraits which were impressed on the current money. This is not the heightening of figure, nor is it, in fact, our own language. Petronius and Pliny, at a considerable distance of time from each other, have dictated these expressions to our pen. Let each of them speak for themselves. Petronius says, "*pecuniæ cupiditas hæc tropica instituit; noli ergo mirari, si pictura deficit, cum omnibus diis hominibusque formosior videatur massa auri quam quicquid Apelles, Phidias, Græculi delirantes, fecerunt*". The words of Pliny are, "*nunc vero in totum marmoribus pulsa pictura et auro. Materium malunt conspici omnes; rerum, non animi, pretiis excubatur; honorem non nisi in pretio ducentes. Imagines pecuniæ, non suas, relinquunt. Animorum imagines non sunt; aliter apud majores, hæc erant quæ spectarentur*".

From patrons that fordidness of principle descended to artists, whenever chance gave a call on their profession. And how should it not descend? When the views of gain were the universal bias, how should they miss to guide the measures of professional skill? The genius and pains that should have wrought for the discerning mind gave way too much to the hurry which looked only to be paid. At least, that was the case so far as Romans themselves were concerned in the arts. The emperors might surely have learnt, and have conveyed to their

* Petron. Satyric. p. 422.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 1. 2. & 7.

people, a better lesson, from what had been publicly instituted as revered monuments of instruction: they should therefore have been the last people to forget, that "the way to the temple of honour was through that of virtue".

Here then the account is justly closed with respect to the Roman pencil, which we shall have no occasion to follow one step further. But it will be necessary to resume the view of sculpture from the commencement of the empire, because that presents in some respects a difference of circumstances. Although it could not but participate in the prejudice arising from those moral causes, which ruined the pencil in Rome, yet it was borne up somewhat better from those other causes, which have often continued sculpture in demand when painting has been neglected, or even little known; and from other causes which will be found to rest with the Greeks. Also, when it began to decline, that decline was not equal, and regular, and uninterrupted, for there were periods or moments in which it now and then revived, as it were with applause.

The fact is, that from the reduction of Greece the Roman sculptures, and the Roman school, were Greek, and must be considered as Greek. It was not therefore the young arts of Rome, but the old and deep-matured spirit of the Greeks, which was committed to the influence of those moral causes that have been mentioned, and which with the encouragements of occasional patronage would take a longer time before it became exhausted. It would never be exhausted, until all those vain and mercenary passions, which fought the acquisition of gold, and marble, and precious stones, more precious still when it's

art was bestowed on them, were quite subdued in the Romans, and lost in those other causes which subdued them as a people.

In order to see what became of sculpture in Rome from the latter days of the republic, the proper method will be to follow the Greek style in that city to its real decline. In that way we shall most truly review what others have been accustomed to call the Roman school.

It will naturally be concluded, that how frequent soever the employment of Greek artists had been in the former stages of that republic, when, as we are assured by the express authorities of Varro and Pliny, the Etruscan style possessed a leading influence there and in all Italy, a very material change was nevertheless obtained by sculpture, when Greece had been conquered, and the flower of its artists was brought to the Roman capital. They were brought there, because that capital was then become the great scene of employment for genius, the great meridian of patronage. In the reign of Augustus, if not before, sculptors of the first character in various branches, not excepting that of engraving on precious stones, went from their native Greece, and settled at Rome*. And these appear to have been constantly followed by others, as encouragements invited them.

What that change was, which sculpture then obtained, may be seen in the bas-reliefs of Augustus, of Germanicus, and of times still lower; it may also be seen in some statues, but especially in the fine series of the Cæsars†. We may consider it as

* See Dictionnaire des beaux arts par Lacombe Verb. Gravure. p. 291.

† Saggio di lingua Etrusca, Continuazione del Tomo II. p. 40.

commencing under Julius, and as being seen in some degree under Gallienus, and even later still, comprizing a space of three centuries, or thereabouts. There is nothing marvellous, nor supremely difficult, in tracing it's course through those periods. In this research the lovers of fine art obtain those advantageous lights, which well repay them for the pains with which they examine minutely every bust. They gather with confidence from thence the style which was in vogue under every Cæsar. They acquire by little and little a skill, which shews them to what epoch every sculpture is most probably to be referred, as a man skilled in the style and manner of ancient writings can form a probable conjecture to what age every parchment or manuscript belongs. We are sensible that no precise rule can be laid down so general in it's extent as to suit every particular period, and much less every particular situation. For the arts will now and then appear superior to the times, as well as times will commonly baffle the arts; and great inequalities will sometimes appear in the same moment. In the medallions of emperors, and in their heads, we see that in periods unfavourable to the arts of design many excellent artists flourished, and *vice versa*. So in one and the same medal, as in that of C. and of L. Cæsar, the reverse shall be in a bad style, and the head in a good one. Nevertheless, in every age there is to be marked a ruling taste in sculpture, as in writing, which commonly influences and is to be found in the works of that age*.

Under the first Cæsars the Greek style appeared plain and distinct, although it was attended with some little hardness, as

* Saggio di lingua Etrusca, Continuazione del tomo II. p. 41.

Mengs* has remarked. That style is manifested in the squareness of the figure, and in a certain touch that is not laboured, but sometimes only sketched, yet full of boldness, force, and truth. In such a style it is not a fineness in the hair or other distinct parts that is displayed, but great art in the whole mass: the pupil of the eye is not cut, but the eyes are formed large, and the look is commanding: the personal features are not much drawn, but there is a general expression of the character so lively and so eloquent, that it decides the nature of the subject just as the historian would pithily describe it. These observations are verified in various instances to be found in the series of the first Cæsars. There are two youthful heads of Augustus, which breathe all the fire of his triumvirate, and of the first years of his reign; while a third head and a statue, which represent him in full manhood, are the effigy of that moderation and mildness which marked his subsequent years. In Agrippa we find the thinking character, and the man undaunted to meet an enemy, or to advise a monarch. In Livia is marked a fawning spirit; in Julia a boldness which favours of the impudent. Having seen Caligula, you would think that he had consulted the looking glass, to appear more stern and menacing. Claudius speaks a dull stupidity. Nero a boy, and Nero grown up, appear respectively to be worthy of the commendation which is due to the docile pupil of Seneca, and of the infamy which follows the execrable murderer of Agrippina.

It was to be lamented that such a perfection of the Greek style, once established in Rome, should have been thwarted by

* Vol. I. p. 190.

any adverse and discouraging circumstances whatever. But in addition to those causes which have been stated before, and in consequence of which commissions for sculptures became much rarer than they had been in the commonwealth*, Tiberius and Claudius restrained to a few the privilege of having statues in public†. Several of the emperors were not very favourable to the arts, or they were suspicious of great merit, so that the character arising from an eminence in sculpture became sometimes dangerous to be sought‡. Then came on those substitutes for sculpture in the incrustations of marble by various ways which Pliny has related§. Along with these, their fancied shields which became a vogue, wrought in gold and silver, and relieved with figures, were but an affectation of sculpture, and an apology for their neglect of those expressions of character which were the excellency of the Grecian style: these were little studied, if the joke of Cicero on a half-length of his brother Quintus on one of those shields may be taken as a criterion of their merit: he humourously remarked, as Macrobius has preserved the anecdote, that they had discovered a new principle of ingenuity, by shewing that the half was greater than the whole; for his brother was a very short man, and the figure was taken in gigantic proportion. Then the habit of changing the heads of statues to make them fit any character of the time was fatal to original works; insomuch that those original works, instead of being sought as the monuments of virtues, were sunk at one time into the means of gratifying those low and vicious sentiments, by

* Plin. lib. 34. c. 2.

† Dion. lib. 9. p. 681. Suet. in. Caio cap. 124. et Gron. ibid.

‡ Cav. Tirab. Stor. della Lettr. Ital. V. 2. p. 212.

§ Plin. lib. 35. c. 1.

which the Roman youth was rendered effeminate and corrupt. "If a new figure was wrought, says Pliny, it was the figure of "wrestlers, or gladiators, or that of Epicurus*." These things naturally brought sculpture to be sensible of decline, at least in the demands for it, if not in its own power of execution. It is true, the language of Pliny applies to the latter point as well as to the former, and indeed grounds upon the want of expression in character the decline of patronage; "quoniam animorum imagines non sunt, negliguntur etiam corporum†." Yet it must be remembered that sculpture was in Greek hands, and its resources were strong. That author was right with respect to painting, which, although it be a sister-art, depends on a wider combination of professional talents, and was then suffered to feel all the prejudices of bad colouring, as well as of poor composition, in Rome; yet with his leave, sculpture produced in his time some excellent works‡. We look on the head of Seneca in bronze, on some statues of Nero, and on that of Cornelius Balbus's son, with much admiration. Some statues and heads of Vespasian and of Titus vied with those of Augustus; and in the following reign they were always better. One of the Medicean Trajans tells you in his very countenance how well entitled he was to the character of *Optimus*, given him by his own age, and confirmed to him by posterity§. Nothing can shew more strongly the spirit and deep-laid resources of Grecian art than the manner in which it raised itself, after the past train of discouragements, to the perfection in which it appeared in the reign of Trajan.

* Plin. lib. 35. cap. 2.

† Ibid.

‡ D'Ancarv. V. 2. p. 14.

§ Saggio di lingua Etrusca, ubi supra.

When we come to that of Adrian, we must take a new view. We meet a new epoch marked by a new taste, which some have called Roman. And indeed it varied essentially from the spirit of that Greek style which has been discussed, inasmuch as it employed great pains on those distinct parts which that style was less sedulous to finish. It was therefore more laboured, more exact, and in some sense more shrewd, than that which marked the period of the first Cæsars: but we must see in what that superior labour and exactness consisted. The hairs were more worked, and more loose; the eye-brows were relieved, and the eye-balls were marked with a deep furrow, which became a practice very frequent after Adrian, while it was hardly ever seen before him*; the air of the women was also more gay. Yet, with all those pains they commonly left behind them a just expression of character; it is true, the personal physiognomy was more marked, but the disposition and mind was less revealed. It seems that sculpture then lost much of that sublime, which it had acquired from the Greeks, and which resembled the sublime of writers, whether in prose or poetry, who despise the polish of a laboured eloquence, and yet with a few strokes hit off the mind, raising it above itself, and making it to teach more than is spoken. In a word, the style introduced under Adrian was more florid than that under the preceding Cæsars, but it was less grand; and yet it had its admirers in the same manner as some may prefer Pliny to Cicero, Velleius to Livy. It continued awhile under the Antonines, but decreased sensibly in their reign, and still more under Severus and those who came after him; although some admirable heads of Caracalla are seen, as in the Farnese palace at Rome†.

* Winckelm. Lett. V. 3. p. 327.

† Saggio di lingua Etrusc. ubi supra.

About the time of Alexander Severus a new manner arose, which departed from both the preceding styles, as it had neither the fine touch of the one, nor the laboured finish of the other, neither the individual likeness of the later style, nor the characteristic expression of the older, but inclined to a roughness which became ungracious. We may consider that roughness to consist in certain deep furrows in the forehead and the face, in the hair and beard formed with a long line, in the eye-balls more hollowed, and in a general turn of design executed more with a force of hand than of science: the countenances especially of females and of children favoured of dryness and languor; the physiognomy was less decisive, and both in medals and marble oftentimes one face was confounded with another, so that it was doubtful, for instance, whether it was a Trebonianus or a Phillipus*.

That decline was increased by the continual revolutions of the empire. Emperors were then but of short continuance; their elevation was only a fatal presage of their ruin. No sooner was an emperor proclaimed, but his images must be dispersed through the Roman world. And how was that to be done? To have waited for new images would have been to lose most commonly the opportunity of raising them; because that emperor, and many others, would probably have been dead long before. The heads therefore were taken from those of the immediate predecessor in the public places, and that of the successor was substituted in their stead. Thus every city shewed in the language of its own art who was the sovereign over it. As an evidence of these facts, statues and busts are still to be seen in the collec-

* Saggio di lingua Etrusc. ubi supra.

tions of that country without a head, and with a hole left in the upper part, in which were placed by one hand after another the head of the reigning prince, perhaps no more like him than that which crowned the statue or the bust before. Now can it be supposed that sculptures wrought here and there, from different examples, and often in great hurry, could be conducted with accuracy? Most certainly they could not. But this will account to us for the many heads in that epoch, and sometimes in the preceding one, which pass in museums as unknown, and will lead us to conclude that they belonged to some emperor. And in forming our judgments upon them, we should not proceed by examining minutely the particular physiognomy part by part, as some have thought fit to do, but by taking the whole of the visage together; for the peculiar traits of the physiognomy came not within the reach, or at least within the study, of those periods; if the *tout ensemble* came nearly up to the object intended, it was as much as could be expected.

It is true, there are not wanting busts, and even statues, of considerable value which belong to that period of decline; but those must be considered as copies from more ancient ones; more especially as there are not seen any fine statues of those times, but with some defects, which plainly shew themselves to have been additions of the copier.

To follow the ancient sculpture through all the steps by which it verged into that barbarism, would be needless, and afford but little pleasure. Every mind will easily conceive how rapid those steps must have been, when, as a modern writer has justly observed, “genius destitute of culture and emulation neglected

“ all good models, and fell into a torpor*”. To those, however, who may have curiosity to pursue that research, the opportunities are open in the museums of Italy, which will lead the inquirer with satisfaction through all the different epochs and styles of that sculpture†.

* Millot *Anc. Hist.* V. 2, p. 263.

† *Saggio di lingua Etrusc.* ubi supra. p. 44.

 ROMAN PATRONAGE.

CHAP. II.

Roman patronage much obstructed by the habits of collecting from other countries—that patronage obtained mostly by foreigners—Nero's passion for colossal extravagance—Vespasian and Titus the first examples of patronage worthy of real applause—Domitian a wretch—Trajan the second Pericles of the world—Adrian's support of the arts various in it's complexion, and censurable in many circumstances—the causes which then brought on the change of the Greek style—the Antinous considered—the purity of the Antonines in the encouragement of arts as in every thing else—after their time no patronage worthy of recognition in Rome—the arts just kept alive by the zeal of Christians to have the representation of holy persons or stories in the subterraneous places of their worship—observations on the great antiquity of those sacred caverns—all patronage extinguished in Rome by the removal of the seat of empire—the spoliations which followed that event.

IT is a very different view which the patronage of the arts in Rome, both Republican and Imperial, presents to us from what we have seen in Greece. The Greeks resorted to their own genius for what they possessed. But in Rome what was executed as an original work, and by artists of the time, bore a very

small proportion to what was brought there by distant collections. And where the passion for collecting is predominant, all pretensions to patronage must be gone. But the Romans collected even from Egypt, not merely the golden statue of Cleopatra, which Augustus set up in the temple of Venus, and which might have accounted in some degree for such spoils of Egyptian art, but whatever else of ingenuity could be drawn from thence. And those Egyptian collections they made, when Rome had been long enriched in the arts of Greece, Sicily, and Carthage. Under such circumstances to collect from Egypt, and in abundance, certainly argued at least more vanity than taste, and shewed that they sought those works more as spoils than as treasures.

At the same time the fine arts were prosecuted in Rome; although, with such means of improving them as the Romans had, surely no people ever rose so slowly to very moderate degrees of character. The fact is, that what encouragements were bestowed on the arts, when their princes were willing that any should be given, were gathered chiefly by foreigners, with whom the Roman genius could not vie, by the confession of their own writers, in works of elegance, and with whom therefore the artists of Rome would be as little inclined to vie as patrons were to encourage them. When Virgil makes an ingenuous confession of the Roman inferiority in these elegant lines,

Excudent alii (*Græci*) spirantia mollius æra :
Credo equidem ; vivos ducent de marmore vultus :

the emulation which Augustus had the power of calling forth

from his own people was not such as was likely to decide his preference in their favour, nor did it so decide his preference in those few original works, which his greater passion for more ancient ones left as the means of employing the talents around him. It has been already observed, that Tiberius and Claudius, instead of encouraging the arts, laid very considerable restraints on their exercise; the latter of whom, and also Caligula before him, had no other thought about the uses of art than to gain from thence a head which they might insert in the place of one cut out from a picture of Apelles, or a statue of Phidias*.

The artists employed by Nero were chiefly Greeks, although we do not forget that the Roman painter Fabullus, who has been already mentioned, was employed in his golden house, most probably because Fabullus painted low subjects. And even Greeks were likely to be carried by his patronage, which was as unprincipled as his mind, into an extravagance in the arts which would bereave them of every precious gift they had possessed, and render them only the subjects of ridicule. Pictures and statues one hundred and ten feet high were only fit to be contemplated by him, whose mind was excessive in all things, and who conceived that no representations of himself could be enormous enough to equal his own greatness. So far, however, he helped to keep up the art of Zenodorus in casting statues of that colossal size. And if the peculiar skill of that artist died with him, and was lost to the Romans, as Pliny asserts†, it is no wonder, since they did not shew themselves eminent in those degrees of the art which were more commonly attainable; and they must

* Sueton. in Calig.

† Lib. 34. c. 7.

have been very indolent indeed to gain information, when Zenodorus had an established workshop at Rome, in which were remaining in Pliny's time models of that colossus in clay.

While we are speaking of that figure, we think it proper to remark, that they must be mistaken who have asserted, that the art of casting such large statues was one of those modern discoveries which were unknown to the ancients, and that this colossus of Nero, as well as that of Rhodes, were probably not cast, but only formed of separate plates*. To that idea it is enough to reply, that Pliny has spoken of it as being cast, which he must have known well, because he saw it familiarly ; and if it had not been cast, the art which died with Zenodorus was not worthy of a remark. We are obliged nevertheless to late compilers, who have given us a minute detail of the progress by which those great works of art are accomplished†.

In Vespasian and Titus, the latter of whom sat on the throne but a very short time, we find the characters of a patronage most happily reversed in every thing from that which but ill merited the name in Nero ; and those characters we find most happily descending from father to son. Indeed, in those emperors we meet the first examples of a patronage, on which we can look with respect in Imperial Rome. Attached as much as any men to the works of elegance, and to the encouragement of artists, they measured those encouragements by prudence, and regulated what was desirable to themselves by what it became them to feel for the

* See Dictionnaire des beaux arts par M. Lacombe ; Verb. *Bronze*.

† Ibid.

people at large. While they promoted all the improvements of genius and taste, they did not forget to draw the line which separates between them and the establishment of public burdens. They were anxious to give dignity and lustre to their country, but they did not wish that in the pursuit of those objects any individual should feel a single oppression. Thus the elegant arts were made compatible with policy, the people who in fact paid for them beheld them with pleasure, not a murmur was excited by any expence which rose up before them. The temple of Peace under the decorating hands of Vespasian was embraced with as much good will as if it had actually brought to them all the felicity announced by it's name, or as when he emptied his coffers on his amphitheatre for their amusement : and Titus was no less "the delight of mankind," when he was raising his sumptuous arch, than when assuming the office of pontiff he declared, that not a drop of Roman blood should be shed in punishment. In all these things there was seen nothing of the foolishness and waste, which had essayed under Nero to unite the dead lake of Avernus with the mouth of the Tiber.

In the exercise of that patronage we may be sure that every opportunity of coming into view, which Roman artists were capable of meeting, was constantly afforded them. This is plain from the employment then given to the two Roman painters, who have already been named, in the temples of Virtue and Honour. But neither Vespasian nor Titus could create powers, which the age preceding had not prepared to their hands. It is nevertheless certain, that they afforded the best helps to those powers which had ever been given in the empire; and to those helps, as well as to the experience gained from the Greeks under Trajan, must be

attributed what appears afterwards to have been done by Romans in the age of Adrian. In architecture, as we shall presently see, they did not need those helps. We must consider the arch of Titus, so far as relates to its order and construction, to be the work of Romans. But no inference will follow from thence that the sculptors were Roman. The sculptor and the architect might be quite independent of each other. Nor is there any thing in the character of Roman sculpture in that period to induce a contrary presumption. If it be admitted that the Laocoon was the production of Vespasian's or of Titus's patronage, then is there evidence that Grecian sculptors were employed by those emperors. And if those very artists, by whom the Laocoon was wrought, were not employed on the arch of Titus, yet might there not also be other Greeks in his patronage? And as the powers, which produced that wonderful groupe, could not easily meet a competition from Roman artists, it will not be very natural to suppose that he would take the latter in preference to the former, on a work so extremely interesting to his dearest fame.

Domitian was a wretch, who cherished nothing but the profligacy of his own mind; and it is of little account what such a wretch might do in the arts. He banished eloquence and literature from Rome, and if he called in the aid of sculpture, it was to feed his own vanity, for which the Romans were not obliged to him, when he sent to Greece for what his own people were competent to execute—new columns for the rebuilding of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. His patronage, however, perished with him in a great measure, as it deserved. The indignant senate,

having seen him assassinated, bid all his statues to be thrown down, and to mingle in his oblivion.

Trajan will supply more agreeable reflections. In his days the Grecian school at Rome saw the best meridian which was given to it in that city; and the style which was afterwards engrafted on the sublimity of that school, and was denominated Roman, would probably not have risen to introduce itself, if the brilliancy of Trajan's reign had not gone before it—a brilliancy, in which history is agreed, after all the allowances for compliment in the panegyric of Pliny the younger. From those principles of conquest, to which he succeeded along with the Imperial throne, but which perhaps he nourished more than many of his predecessors, we must be content to attend him to his triumphs, and to those monuments of them, in which the arts of his reign secured their own immortality together with his. On his illustrious column, on his triumphal arches at Rome and Ancona, the sculptors of the age recording his victories recorded also those honours of their art, which went down to posterity with their Imperial patron, until the poverty of genius in a distant period committed plagiarism upon them, and displaced some of them to grace its infirmities in another situation. As a patron of the arts, unquestionably Trajan must stand, without disrespect to Alexander the great, the second Pericles of the world; differing indeed in this, that he obtained from the hands of strangers those noble monuments which rose up under his eye, while those of Pericles were executed by the artists of his own country. The man, from whose immediate designs, and under whose immediate direction, all the great works of his reign were executed, was Apollodorus, a Grecian. Nor let that choice prejudice his cha-

rafter as a patron. His liberal and enlarged mind, ever open to cherish merit, was not less sensible of it, nor less ready to cherish it, in his own people than in the Greeks. But the talents of Apollodorus were very great, and there was no resisting their influence. His capacity in architecture was on the largest scale, comprising not only the most consummate taste, but that great essential which is nevertheless so rarely found to be combined, the knowledge of the civil engineer. The bridge erected by him over the wide and rapid current of the Danube, the palace of Trajan, his forum, and some temples, his triumphal arches, and his magnificent column, on which were represented in sculpture the victories of that emperor over the Daci, are sufficient testimonies of all those powers in Apollodorus, which can never be seen in any man, and be overlooked*. Among the Roman artists of that period many were possessed of abilities; but those which were found in Apollodorus were not easily rivaled, so as to leave any difficulty in the decision that was proper to be made.

Under Adrian the subject of patronage affords room for much variety of speculation. He succeeded to all the splendors of art under Trajan, and with talents which might have given the expectation that he would even outshine his predecessor in the nourishment of all that was elegant. For with more learning than Trajan, he possessed also some professional skill in architecture, painting, and sculpture†. Had therefore the perfection of art been his ruling consideration, there is no doubt but he might

* Procop. de ædificiis Justin. lib. 4. c. 6. Dio p. 789. Fabretti Col. Traj. c. 8. p. 242.

† Coiffetea Hist. Rom. p. 569. Anc. Univ. Hist. Vol. 15. p. 155.

have kept it up to the standard at which he found it, if he had done it no other service. That he did not so maintain it, but suffered it to feel a change for the worse, has been already mentioned and explained in our discussion of the Greek style at Rome. The causes of that change, being intimately connected with his influence as a patron, will now be properly considered here. And these will be found by all, who look carefully into facts, to be resolved into his own extreme conceit and jealousy.

Proud of his own skill, he could not refrain from intruding universally on the skill of those whom he employed. Their merit had no fair play in his hands, no freedom of exercise to its own capacity. They trembled, while they were employed, lest their judgment should contravene his, and lest not only their own labours, but his favour, and with that their fame, should be lost. Can there be a doubt that under the influence of such a known disposition in their prince, the artists around him were shackled in the exercise of their genius; and that they would be induced, as well as Favorinus the philosopher, to reply to those who might blame them for sacrificing to his mistaken opinions, "can the man be wrong who has thirty legions at his command?"*

Unquestionably the point of judgment was mistaken by Adrian in those interferences, let his own personal skill have been what it might. Every artist must see with his own eyes, and go along with his own judgment, or his powers are gone, because his zeal is gone. And the gentlest suggestions of a sovereign cannot be received like those of others; they will warp

* Spart. in Adr. p. 1—3. Ammian. lib. 30. Dio lib. 69. p. 790.

too much, even where they are met by great strength of mind in the artist; and where there is not that peculiar strength of mind, they will become commands, and of course will exhaust the artist of himself.

Those hazards were wisely avoided by the example of Trajan; and it was doubtless owing in some degree to the influence of his example, that genius rose so strong around him, and that the Grecian taste maintained its sublimity of principle. But Adrian had other thoughts, and suffered himself to be carried away by prejudices which took another direction. An incident, trifling in its first appearance, became magnified into an event which added the influence of indignant jealousy to that of self-conceit, and gave a new epoch to the Grecian style.

*In a conversation which happened to take place between Trajan and Apollodorus concerning works of art, Adrian being present and offering an opinion of his own on the subject, Apollodorus pertly turned to him, and bid him go and paint his pumpions, knowing that Adrian was then employed on such a painting, of which he was rather proud. We may easily guess the consequence which was likely to arise from thence in a mind like that of Adrian, whenever a fit occasion came. And yet he seemed to have smothered his displeasure not only during the life of Trajan, but for some time after his own succession to the empire; for it is said that he availed himself of the talents of Apollodorus in some of the earliest works of his reign. So far his rancour submitted to become a sacrifice to his interest and

* Dio p. 789. Xiphilin. Hist. Rom. in Adriano.

his cunning. But it rankled still in his bosom ; the sacrifice was only a short one, probably till he had found out the man, and a Roman, by whom he could carry into execution both his public works, and the retaliation on which he had determined. Detrianus was the man on whom he fixed. In a short time Apollodorus was banished, on some pretext which answered the purpose. But that was only a prelude to further punishment, equally meditated at the moment ; and a new occasion was sought to give it colour, and to complete the Imperial resentment. Adrian had made a design of the temple of Venus, of which he was not a little vain, and which in fact he afterwards carried into execution. He thought it very convenient to let Apollodorus see that design ; but with other views than to gratify either his pride by letting that artist see how well he could do without him, or his secret rancour by mortifying the feelings of the Grecian. He knew the bluntness of Apollodorus, and had experienced the freedom with which he spoke his mind ; there was no doubt therefore to be made, that when he should see the plans of the temple, if they were disapproved, he would not spare them in his remarks. The designs were therefore sent to him in his exile, with an intimation that his opinion upon them would be accepted. The event fell out as Adrian had expected. “ The temple was too scanty ; it was too low ; the “ statues, although they were fitting, were too high ; if they “ should rise up, they would knock their heads against the “ roof”. The last ridicule was more insupportable than the first, or it was affected so to be, although it had been sought and expected. The same year, which saw that temple of Venus dedicated, the 130th year of the christian æra, saw Apollodorus put to death in his exile.

The place of that great artist having been filled with another, and a Roman, the moment was arrived for Adrian to establish his own notions of sculpture, at least. Perhaps he could not depend on bringing the Greeks at once into an adoption of his ideas, or perhaps he was conscious that the ideas he meant to encourage were such as the Roman artist would be more easily competent to reach ; it was enough however, in one view, that the Romans were not Greeks. Whether, in fact, he loved the Roman better than the Greek, is not material, there was a passion engaged to do something which should look the Greek in the face, and which should be considered as the emanation of his own refined judgment. It was necessary too that the Roman artists, or those Greeks who might come into his ideas, should be borne up by the credit of some new principles, which might resist the old celebrity of the Grecian style at Rome. The opening was convenient and fair, which that style had left to those who might conceive that greater perfection would be given by more labour and finishing, and that the minuter parts of a figure would not appear the worse when they were wrought with more minute art. The whole would then appear more florid to the eye ; and it was not every one who would look for perfection beyond that floridness of the whole, or that fineness of the minuter parts, which would also be remembered to have obtained its sanction in the peculiar example of *Lyfippus** ; and that would compensate perhaps with the bulk of admirers for less success than *Lyfippus* took care to reach in the sublime of the whole.

* *Plin. lib. 34. c. 8. Propriæ Lyfippi videntur esse argutiæ operum, custodiæ in minimis quoque rebus.*

Thus was introduced that change in the Greek style, which with the weight of Adrian's judgment and patronage did long gain admirers, and was not unfitly called Roman, as it was not the Grecian, and as it had it's origin in Rome. He was so proud of it that he carried it to Athens*, there to display anew, by his vaunted patronage, that taste in art, on which the Athenians certainly would not look with full admiration, although they should see in it the imitation of Lyfippus's finishing, if all their former principles of taste were not extinguished.

There was not much room for the indulgence of that innovation on the Greek style in the figure which Adrian called forth to perpetuate the memory of his favourite Antinous. That statue was a work of excellent art, and most happy in it's application to the character for which it was intended, although it was not original in it's design. It appears from the closest reference of circumstances to have taken it's cast from those Grecian figures of Bacchus, which represent that god in the most attracting and delicate forms of both sexes, and which were denominated the Bacchus Dafyllius, or Bacchus Satyr†. Perhaps the great exemplar of that figure, in which all the difficulties of so new and elegant a combination were surmounted, was given to the world by Praxiteles in that famous satyr of which Pausanias has spoken from his own eye-sight, and which Pliny has distinguished by the name of *Peribæton*, from it's being universally known and applauded‡. That Bacchus, when represented young, had the face of a virgin, and was most beautiful in his form, Ovid has told

* Pausan. Attic.

† D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 340.

‡ Pausan. lib. 1. p. 45. Plin. cap. 8.

us in these words, “ tu formosissimus alto conspiceris cælo; tibi, “ cum sine cornibus adstas, virgineum caput est”*. It was another expression by which that character was distinguished, that the head was somewhat turned to one side, and inclined towards the breast†; the reason of which was, that such was the action given to the head of the ox, the original emblem applied to Bacchus, whenever that animal was emblematically represented‡. The ivy was also symbolical of Bacchus, as the god who was supposed to preside over humid nature§; and so was he crowned in all the figures of this kind. These circumstances are all exemplified in a very fine head of marble in the Capitol, in a beautiful bust of bronze found at Herculaneum, and published among the bronzes of the king of Naples, and also in many other ancient sculptures still existing in the hands of private individuals||.

Turn to the figure of Antinous, as it is seen in a statue of the the Capitol, in a bust of the gallery at Florence, and in many heads that are in England and elsewhere, and you find all those circumstances equally exemplified. So Pausanias tells us that this favourite of Adrian was represented at Mantinæa in Arcadia, and he adds moreover, that in that place there were many statues of “ Antinous in the likeness and with the characters of “ Bacchus**”. If this needed any further confirmation, it is obtained in the medallions of Antinous struck at Smyrna, on the

* Ovid. Metam. lib. 4. v. 48.

† Plin. cap. 8. D'Anc. V. 1. p. 342.

‡ Ibid. p. 343.

§ Ibid. p. 223

|| Ibid. p. 343. 349.

** Pausan. lib. 8. p. 617. D'Ancarv. ibid. p. 342.

reverse of which is the figure of the ox, the known symbol of that deity.

These views will substantially explain the chief points of character in the figure of Antinous. They shew us beyond dispute that it was the purpose of Adrian to exhibit his favourite as a god—as that god, whose rites had been most revered, and whose attributes were considered as most profound. D'Ancarville has given us good reasons to think, that the Antinous, whose hands have been restored, as well as the Bacchus satyr, originally held a vase in the left hand and a patera in the right*.

In the formation of that figure, while the sculptor was guided by those ruling traits which were the accepted distinctions of Bacchus, there can be no doubt but he also studied, as far as the natural restraints of the subject would permit him, the personal features of Antinous, that the figure might still be known for his, and that the favourite might not be lost in the god. Looking on the figure in this view, as a personal character, as well as a work of emblematic art, we know not if all the difficulties of studying the latter, by the combination of the most selected attractions in male and female youth, have not at last produced the former in the best truth of nature, and in all those traits which the mind would form to itself as most prominent in that species of character by which we know Antinous. It's softness is wholly it's own, neither male nor female: the attraction of the eyes is but half disclosed; their lure is not that of a woman, yet it is that which wishes to be noticed, but dares not fully shew

* D'Ancarv. V. i. p. 351.

that wish: the modesty of beauty draws a shade from conscious shame; the look submitted to the earth avoids the prying eye. More is unnecessary to be remarked, or the judicious observer will find more in the figure for his own contemplation. We believe that if any artist upon earth were to study most deeply such a character, he would be likely to fall into the expression of the Antinous, although he had never seen it. To any other artist than one who had before him a sublime model of the Bacchus satyr the difficulties attending the execution of that piece of art must have been very great, and even the difficulty of giving only what was personal to Antinous. But the emblematic portion of it relieved that artist from some of those difficulties, which otherwise might not have left it safe to give to such a patron the figure of such a favourite, endued with those peculiar traits of softness, which being either diminished or overcharged in the copy might prejudice the merit of the art, or be taken as a satire on the subject and on the prince who had commanded it. Both, however, were avoided.

Yet as a work of excellent art, we cannot retire from it without disgust, when we bring to our reflection all its concomitant circumstances. We are perplexed to find in a great prince so much capacity of intellect and taste, and so much capacity of doing honour to the age, and service to ingenious talents, combined with so much baseness of principle; we are fretted to see the useful purposes of patronage degraded by the want of morals, which alone can raise it into honour. How unfortunate, that the elegancies of art should become the means of abhorring the occasions which produced them! How self-abased is that patronage, which would sacrifice the arts to its lusts, and cannot be

refrained from making them the records of it's own shame! Adrian's passion for Antinous raised not only that statue, but even temples to his memory * ; and parasitical artists proclaimed through the world, by an infinity of medals struck in honour of the favourite, the disgrace which they should have hidden.

Those views, however, were reversed in the next scene of the arts to which we are carried under Antoninus and Marcus Aurelius, the blessings of heaven in a moral view, possessed of every virtue, and free from every vice, if the human character can be so free. The patronage, therefore, which they severally extended to the arts was at least pure, if it was not so abundant as that which had distinguished preceding days. The mild and philosophic virtues of both those emperors gave them less joy in the publication of what was glorious or splendid than in the private consciousness of having acted right. That their fame in having maintained the empire should be recorded, they deserved better than half the princes who had gone before them : that popular ideas of national glory, illustrated in it's progress by the increase of stately columns and splendid arches, should be gratified, was right : that the vigour of ingenious talents should be kept up in the country, they were too discreet not to know and feel. But the humble and philosophic turn of their minds led them to indulge those considerations more by the preservation and embellishment of those public edifices, which had been raised by their predecessors, than by the abundance of new designs devoted to their own fame. Sculpture, therefore, as well as architecture, was still called forth ; but it was on the point of becom-

* Dio lib. 69. p. 793.

ing a prey to “ pining atrophy, marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence*.” From the time of Marcus Aurelius, we must not look for any vigorous patronage of it’s powers in Rome, which the hastening steps of general depravity began to smother, and those were followed by the habits of making spoil on past works, to serve instead of new and original ingenuity.

These mischiefs would have been sooner felt by the arts, and the decline of patronage would have been sooner accomplished in Rome, if a new occasion had not arisen to keep both alive for some time ; and that was the growing influence of Christianity, which excited the representation of holy persons or sacred histories, for the instruction or animation of Christians in the places of their divine worship.

Those places were then of necessity private ; often in subterraneous, but always in solitary, situations. There is something curious in following these, as they appear to have had a very old possession in the prejudices of the world. A few words concerning them will not take us far from our point.

In pagan times, when there were no restraints, these caverns were the receptacles of dark and barbarous superstition ; of which a stronger instance cannot be given than that which is related by a modern traveller, who tells us, that among the Agows in Abyssinia those caverns for the purposes of religion are every where excavated under the mountains of the country, and that in the twelfth century many of them were converted into churches

* Milton.

by Lalibala the great king and saint of that people*. Those habits of paganism were not relinquished by Christians, wherever men became such, because the fears of persecution converted into prudence what before was accidental choice. But when Christians came to build churches, and might be supposed to lose all fears of persecution or restraint, the prejudices of those former habits were still retained; and although the spacious cathedral afforded a choir, and other chapels above ground, for the open celebration of worship, yet in some private part of the building, oftentimes beneath the choir, a secret chapel was excavated and formed evidently for the uses of devotion, and not merely as a cemetery, because not only the excavation has been found coeval with the first building, but various sculptures have appeared as the first dress of the walls or other parts. Of those vaults or secret chapels several have been discovered in our own country. In the southern part of Italy they are very common, particularly throughout Puglia. They are found under the cathedrals of Otranto, Valerno, Bari, and under the Priory Church in the last of those places†. We need not wonder, therefore, that those subterraneous situations were resorted to at Rome in the earlier days of Christianity. And if they still afforded some opportunities for sculpture, or even painting, we may be sure that the niceties of art were little sought or studied. Christians were then content with the ruder ways of design, which became more and more rude, having no chance of being rescued from that growing barbarism for which it was reserved, at least in Rome, when the seat of empire became transferred to Constantinople.

* See Bruce's Trav. V. 3. p. 741.

† See Swinb. Trav. V. 1. p. 297. 299. V. 2. p. 280. V. 3. p. 180.

That event forbids us to look for any further patronage of the arts in Rome. That city, which had for more than a century been the sport of fortune harrassing her with all the evils attendant on perpetual contests for the succession to the throne, and on the profligacy of those that filled it, was hastening to pay for all the depredations she had committed on the world, by becoming herself the scene of spoliations which did not leave to her in the end a trait of her former greatness, but what was to be found in ruins.

Her own emperors began those spoliations. Constantine stripped her of all that he could remove to grace his new capital. He stripped her of all her best artists, both Greeks and Romans. Three hundred years after him, when Rome had been sacked and plundered by Alaric, Genseric, and Totila, Constantius II. went thither, and carried away whatever was left of much value, with which he laded several vessels. These were driven by a tempest into Sicily, where he was killed; and the Saracens, then masters of the country, took those spoils, and carried them to Alexandria. A similar disappointment had happened to the hopes and the plunder of Genseric, whose vessels laden with statues were lost in his return to Africa*. Thus was terminated all the elegance and splendor, which Rome had been raising for more than a thousand years.

* Theoph. p. 93. Evagr. p. 98. Procop. p. 189.

ROMAN ARCHITECTURE.

CHAP. III.

Architecture the great passion of the Romans, uninterrupted by any public changes or events—evidences of their early intercourse with the Greeks, and use of the Grecian orders—their chief architects Grecian, to the commencement of the empire—the appearance of Vitruvius, and his celebrated work, in the Augustan age, followed by other great names among Roman architects in subsequent periods—those architects most pure in that age—a farther progress in the empire marked by a growing excess in ornamental indulgence—some specifications of those indulgences—and of greater licences on Grecian principles—how such licences ought to be weighed, even under their great antiquity, by moderns—the grand licence taken in the composite order, and that order discussed—not necessary, for the genuine scope of invention, to add to the Greek orders by a new one—the use of those Greek orders but rarely interrupted by the composite, and their purity conspicuous through the reigns of Trajan, Adrian, and the Antonines—great degeneracy growing with little interruption after that period—the excessive enrichments of Dioclesian—remarks on the baptistery of Constantine—how the Romans disposed their private mansions—their knowledge in geometry and perspective.

IN no view of the fine arts do the Romans appear to so much advantage as in their architecture. If a celebrated painter never rose up among them, if they were tedious in rising to any eminence in sculpture, yet they were early enough impassioned by architecture, and that passion continued with them to the last. We do not mean to say that they were always, or very soon, able to be architects for themselves. In that respect, as in both the other branches of art, their school was always Grecian while it was best. We speak at present only of their passion for great buildings. That commenced with their kings, under all of whom considerable designs were carried on, and under some of them, particularly Tarquin the elder, designs that may be called prodigies.

That spirit of architecture was not damped by the plainness and simplicity of republican manners, which were ready in Rome to go to an extent in that way unknown to any other republic. Under those governments exterior modesty had ever been a virtue first studied, in ancient times. The states of Greece were so chaste in that circumstance, that there was not in all the country a single palace, that is, a private building fit to be called a palace by its magnitude or dress. But in the Roman republic those simplicities of sentiment were not retained. Every great man vied with another in the grandeur of his edifice. Pompey had his superb palace. The villa of Caius Marius at Misenum was so vast and grand, that the republican spirit began to feel itself hurt. And yet that of Lucullus, afterwards built on the same spot, left the other a mere cottage in the comparison*. At that time there were in Rome, says Pliny, an hundred palaces, the habitations of

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 36.

private men, equal in grandeur to that of Lepidus in it's first state, which covered the ground ordinarily occupied by an hundred houses*.

It was not likely that the days of Imperial splendor should be marked by inferior portions of that particular ambition, which all the emperors, how different soever in other respects, appeared uniformly to cherish. Augustus led the way to his successors: it was a part of his last words, that "he had left Rome " of marble, which he had found built with bricks". And Constantine, although unable to give effect to the same vanity by able works, yet shewed that he felt an equal measure of it, when, rather than not build temples and triumphal arches, he would be content to steal the elegancies of others, and then to baptize them by his own name, and as his own illustrious work.

No wonder that by those means Rome became filled with all the pride of architecture, not only in aqueducts and sewers wonderful in their plans as well as in the difficulties of their formation, but in temples, theatres, palaces, mausolea, baths, bridges, columns, and triumphal arches, which made that city the admiration of the world, and have even left their ruins stupendous. To the accumulation of those wonders there was no pause. Whatever changes or revolutions took place in the government or in public affairs, the progress of architecture felt them not. If desolations ensued, if fire or time leveled any of their edifices to the ground, they rose again with new and greater embellishments. If an imbecil prince began what he could not finish,

* Plin. lib. 36. c. 15.

the legacy was faithfully completed by the successor, although he had caused the throat of his predecessor to be cut.

The Romans were a long time obliged to seek their architects from other countries. These were sought from Etruria, where the order distinguished by the name of Etruscan was wanted. We shall not wonder if the elder Tarquin sent thither, and not to Greece, for the architect to build his temple of Jupiter Tarpeius. He might naturally have a predilection for the taste of the country in which he was born, or he might prefer in that instance the workmen of Etruria, of whom he must have seen more than of others. That preference however, as we shall presently find, does not seem to have been uniform.

But an actual intercourse of the earliest date appears to have subsisted between the Romans and the Greeks. And why not in architecture as well as in other things? In addition to the evidences of that intercourse arising from the very early settlements of the Greeks in Italy, it is demonstrated by a circumstance of a singular nature in the reign of Servius Tullius, when on the termination of the old dispute between the Romans and Sabines, the terms of the treaty were engraven, not in Latin but in Greek characters, on the pillar which was erected to perpetuate that event. So Dionysius of Halicarnassus has recorded it, and has even gone so far as to draw from thence an argument that the Romans themselves were of Greek origin.

But their early intercourse with the Greeks will be found in their architecture itself. There are still remaining in Rome not only the vestiges of some temples, but more entire views of

others, which were older than that of Tarquin, and are conceived by Palladio, who has closely investigated them, to exhibit still sufficient appearances of their first designs, which he has regularly made out. Those temples are five in number: that of Jupiter Stator by Romulus—two others, called the temples of the sun and moon, by Tatius the Sabine and colleague of Romulus—that of Vesta, now called the church of St. Stefano, by Numa Pompilius—and that of Fortuna Virilis, now the church of Sta. Maria Egittiacca, by Servius Tullius. Of these temples it is true that the last was once burnt, but the outside walls are considered as not having been wholly destroyed by that fire, and are spoken of as now very much in their first taste. The fourth is represented as in its original plan. The two temples ascribed to Tatius are almost in ruins; but the ornaments, little as there appears of them, were easily made out and ascertained. That of Jupiter Stator is said to have been vowed by Romulus on the spot where the irruption of the Sabines was first stopped, and where unquestionably a temple was vowed, and built, and of which there now remain distinguishable two or three columns. With respect to the orders, the Corinthian is seen in all those temples, except in that of Servius Tullius, which has employed the Ionic, rather singularly, when it was dedicated to “Manly Fortune”.

But their materials and ornaments are most important to our notice. That of Vesta was built of Greek marble. The cell of the temple, and its whole design, were extremely good. Its ornaments were plainer perhaps than those of all the rest, yet not without beauty. The capital of the Corinthian columns does not appear to have been so well understood in that work as in others, or in after periods, neither is the leaf used in it the same

as that which was employed by Callimachus ; but perhaps the sculptor who executed that part was not a first-rate artist. In all those other temples the ornaments were wrought with great skill, particularly in that of Jupiter Stator, concerning which it is the observation of Palladio, that there cannot be better work than it's columns, in the capitals of which it is remarkable that there is a beautiful invention of intaglios.

If Palladio be right, and if what remains of those temples and their ornaments were the first workmanship given to them, the question that follows will be answered by every man alike, " cou'd the Romans then do those things for themselves ? and " must they not have them from the hands of Greeks ? " The point, we are nevertheless aware, is still liable to be retarded by another question, which will be uppermost in every man's mind until it is answered, and that is, how we are assured that what remains of those temples and their ornaments was their first construction ?

This question we conceive to be sufficiently answered, if not by the direct opinions of those individuals who have investigated the subject, yet collaterally by evidence adduced from other structures of the same age, which are not subject to the same doubts. Of these the grotto of Egeria, in which Numa composed his code of laws, is a conspicuous example, preserved almost wholly in it's first state by it's peculiar situation under the cover of a hill, which has rendered it impervious to all damps. That grotto shews to this hour a great purity of design, with a masterly execution of the whole. It's columns are Corinthian. The ceiling is decorated with petrified stones of various colours.

There is the opus reticulatum of the ancients, and the Roman bricks. In the great niche of it is a reclining statue of Numa in Greek marble, but now wanting the head. Behind him is the scrinium or box, in which his code was deposited. There are other niches for the nine muses.

Another example of a like kind, and equally worthy to be considered, is the tomb of Tarquin the elder, formed in the old wall of Alba longa. It is sufficiently known by the twelve fasces exhibited there instead of the usual six, because he conquered Tuscany; and also by the regal chair, and the Roman eagle upon it. In this curious monument of antiquity, whose peculiar situation has caused it to be too much overlooked, is displayed a fine piece of science in Grecian architecture, the whole of which is admirably executed, and particularly the sculpture, which is altogether a beautiful conception.

For these examples we are indebted to the investigation of a particular friend and very skilful architect *, who surveyed them accurately on the spot two years ago, and from whose mouth the above report of them has been taken.

So far then the fact is decided, that the Romans at their first setting out had recourse to Greeks, as well as to Etruscans, for their architecture. And so far we seem to be justified in saying, that those writers must have been wrong who have asserted, that the Romans had no magnificent temples in the earlier ages of their state†, or that the first marble temple in Rome was erected by Metellus Macedonicus, cotemporary with L. Mummius the

* Mr. James Playfair.

† Phil. Bonnarot, p. 77.

conqueror of Attica ; or that in his time only the Grecian style of magnificent architecture was first brought into that city *.

But it may yet be said, that those instances of Grecian structures, which we suppose to have existed in Rome from the commencement of the regal state, prove too much, since all those temples, except one, were of the Corinthian order, which it has generally been agreed was not known before Callimachus, whose epoch as the inventor of it is fixed to the year 540 before the Christian æra, which falls in the year of Rome 209, and in the latter end of the reign of Servius Tullius, perhaps beyond the time assigned for the latest of those temples.

This difficulty arises from a great misconception of what was due to Callimachus in that matter. Vitruvius indeed has told the story, on which the pretensions of that Grecian as the inventor of the Corinthian order have generally been suffered to rest. But Vitruvius might be mistaken in a matter of tradition, and the epochs which he has assigned for the institution of the other orders in Greece have not passed without dispute. We shall not urge the favourite opinion of Villalpandus †, seconding that of Josephus, that the Corinthian order was first seen in the temple of Jerusalem five hundred years before Callimachus was born. Beyond all question he cannot be pronounced the man by whom the first thought of that order was started. It has never been pretended by any, that he invented the base or the entablature, which are as much a part of the order as the capital. And let Numa's temple of Vesta have been built, or not, before his time, in either case it pays no tribute to his invention, for the foliage

* Stuart's Athens Vol. 1. pref. p. 4.

† Vol. 2. lib. 5. c. 23.

of the capital is not his. The fact is, that he was the man by whom the Corinthian order was classically finished; as the Doric rose more finished by some man's genius out of that which had been seen long before in the palace of Ænomaus. For any thing therefore arising out of that objection, all those Corinthian temples might have been built in the reigns of those kings to whom they have been given.

If we pass on to the Roman republic, Grecian structures executed there by Grecian hands multiply upon us. The architects of the celebrated portico surrounded by several temples, the munificence of Metellus Macedonicus, were Sauros and Batrachus, both of them Greeks*. The theatre of Marcellus was a structure of pure Greek, affording the best profile of the Greek Doric, beautifully chaste, and rising on the grand idea of representing, by the large stones of which it was built, an immensely strong rock neatly dressed, but with no other than the natural embellishments of the two orders, Doric and Ionic. The lotus in the latter order was compleatly Grecian, and also very profound as they meant it, being taken in the primitive theology which they cherished as emblematic of the principle of life, because it grows in water without any root. Marcellus may be considered as the man, who first led the Romans to study the excellencies of Grecian art in this as well as in other branches†. So he boasted himself. But they were not mature enough at the distance of sixty years before the reduction of Achaia by Mummius to undertake such enterprizes as his theatre. When Marcus Scaurus took from the town of Sicyon pictures instead of money, he shewed that he knew better the talents of the Greeks than to commit to Romans

* Plin. lib. 36. c. 5.

† Plut. vita Marcelli.

his illustrious theatre, and other magnificent edifices in the purity of Grecian design, with which he embellished Rome when he was edile *. Sylla rebuilt the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, after it had been burnt; and Greece furnished the artists, and the Athenian temple of Jupiter Olympius the columns, which were to adorn it†. The amphitheatre of Pompey was built in a close imitation of that of Mitylene, which Greeks best understood, and therefore were fitly employed to copy‡. It has been already remarked, that in the portico and other decorations given by Agrippa to the Pantheon, history has recorded the names of some Greeks that were employed. If any edifices in that period may be considered as conducted by Roman architects, we should suppose it to have been the temple of Concord, as it was rebuilt in the republic upon an Ionic plan: for we cannot suppose that any Grecian architect, on whom the senate and people of Rome would fix for that purpose, could have committed such an inaccuracy as to blend the Doric with the Ionic in the columns. Besides, the capitals and shafts of those columns, some of which forming the portico are still left, appear to have been taken from former columns of different orders. Yet the sculpture in the frize within and without is very fine§. It is likely enough that a Greek sculptor might have been joined to a Roman architect. The Romans could not pretend to vie in sculpture: but there might be some individuals among them pre-

* Plin. lib. 34. c. 15. That theatre is said to have held eighty thousand persons. There were two others made of wood, and sustained on axle-trees, so that they might occasionally be turned round, and become one amphitheatre for combats.

† Ibid. lib. 36. c. 5.

‡ Tacit. lib. 14. Xiphil. p. 14.

§ See Palladio, ch. 30.

tending to architecture, and those men might have interest enough in that popular government to get themselves employed.

In such a succession of Grecian works, accomplished by the first masters that could be had from Greece, it is natural to think that the Romans must have been enlightened and enflamed to a study which gratified one of their first ambitions, and constituted their proudest desire of the arts. It was a school, in which they could not fail to be taught. And we may see it's effects in the formation of a Vitruvius in the Augustan age. He cannot be supposed to have risen at once into the perfection of his knowledge, without a gradual preparation of the age leading him to embrace it, nor to have gained that knowledge without cotemporaries who went along with him in the same studies. The astonishing work which he left behind him was itself a school sufficient for his countrymen. It is impossible for us to pass by it here, without a tribute of gratitude for it's light and science, no less elegant than profound. Entering into the comprehensive spirit of Grecian architecture he has measured with the nicest precision all it's proportions; he has unfolded all the profound arcana of it's principles; and he has placed them in perfect clearness, not only for the study of the professional man, but for the contemplation of the philosopher. The foundation given to architecture in that work was so solid, the connexion with the perfections of Greece afforded by it to the Romans was so close and intimate, that they had nothing to lament in the loss of Argellius's writings on the Grecian orders, or no need to consult them if they were extant. In the books of Vitruvius was found that radical and copious instruction, which might render an education in Greece unnecessary to those who could not con-

veniently visit that country ; might sufficiently inform those who should live when the edifices of Greece were no longer to be studied and measured in their ruins ; and would be important to the more complete illustrations of principles, and the more complete satisfaction of the world, even while the power remained of checking it's rules and lessons by those measurements themselves.

To have reached the knowledge, which was capable of producing such a work, must prove incontestibly the maturity not only of that single mind, but of that age and nation, in the science of which it has treated. And accordingly, besides that great man, there are others in the same age, whose names became conspicuous in that profession under the Imperial patronage : great numbers, we doubt not, were respectably marked by the patronage of individuals no less emulous of splendor than their prince. For we are told that in those early days of the empire there were in Rome no less than seven hundred architects at one time, high in their professional character*. And such encouragement had those architects received, that in the short space of thirty years the greatest private fabric raised in the republic was left inferior to many hundreds greater than itself†. When we consider that according to the policy of those times so much architecture became necessary in the provinces, it is neither to be supposed that Greeks alone would have been sufficient to accomplish it, nor is it probable that Romans pushing themselves forward in a favorite art would not be employed. We find, therefore, out of the multitudes whose names have perished, a Calpurnius raising for Augustus a most splendid marble temple at Puzzuoli‡, wonder-

* Alberti, p. 115.

† Ibid.

‡ Monier's Hist. p. 67.

fully fine in it's taste, and one of the most precious remains of antiquity—the same temple, of which the three columns of Cippoline marble, now standing there behind the ruins of the temple of Serapis, formed the Pronaos*, and had been part of the temple of Serapis itself. We find a Cocceius in the same age executing other Imperial works in that part of the country. What structures arose from the immediate designs of Vitruvius, time has unhappily hidden from our knowledge, except one which he executed for Octavia, by whom he was recommended to Augustus, whose patronage we should not doubt that he had.

The establishment thus given to Roman studies in architecture does not appear to have suffered decrease in subsequent ages. We find Celer and Severus the chief architects of Nero; and Rabirius enjoying the same distinction under Domitian. We make no question of Vespasian's and Titus's patronage of Romans for their architects. The temple of Peace re-edified by the former plainly shewed itself in a variety of circumstances to have been the work of a man, who accommodated Grecian rules to his design, without working scrupulously on those rules; the work, in short, of a Roman genius on Grecian principles: and the arch of the latter cannot possibly leave any other supposition on the subject. In the time of Trajan, indeed, that train of encouragement was interrupted, so far as Apollodorus stood foremost in that prince's selection, for which there appears no other account to be given beyond the acknowledged merit of Apollodorus himself. But under Adrian that train of encouragement came back with Detrianus and others. As we go down towards the period

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 59.

of Dioclesian, when the purity of architecture began to be invaded by licentiousness, we need not seek for the proofs unless in the architecture itself, that it was engrossed by Roman artists. For nothing is more certain than that its purity was best maintained while the eyes of Greeks were over them, and participated of the general patronage; and that its licentiousness was a consequence to which it was always verging, by a fatality in the Roman disposition, when it was left to the Romans themselves.

Its purity never appeared to more advantage in Rome than in the age of Augustus. The Greek school of architecture, as well as of sculpture, was then in its meridian there. The Romans, who were trained to the profession of art, were in fact trained to that school. And they did not then indulge an idea of departing from that beautiful simplicity, which every principle and example of that school had taught them. That beautiful simplicity maintained in richness was conspicuous in all the structures of that age; their ornaments were perfection in the several orders, producing a fine effect in light and shadow, but without any thing superfluous or excessive. In the portico added by Agrippa to the Pantheon, which may be considered as the opening of that age, we obtain the most chaste and simple example of the Corinthian order that antiquity has left*. Very few intaglios appear in the capitals or entablature. That studied simplicity perhaps was created by the connexion of that portico with the Etruscan body of the building; and if so, the architect gave the greater proof of his wisdom. But in the temple of Mars the Avenger, built by Augustus himself, a most stupen-

* Chambray's Paral. p. 67. 71.

dous edifice, which he may be considered as having gone every proper length to adorn, that beautiful simplicity prevailed throughout, the strength which was in character with Mars was not weakened by a profusion of external dress*. The temple erected by Calpurnius at Puzzuoli, whose fine execution has already been mentioned, was perfectly chaste in its enrichments. The same chastity was preserved in another temple at Naples, to Castor and Pollux, the portico of which is still to be seen in the Corinthian order : the capitals are carved with great modesty in the manner of olive-leaves ; and the sacrifice in most excellent bas-relief, which so richly fills the frontispiece, is nevertheless beheld in all the consistent simplicity that can be imagined†.

It was not so in a further progress of the empire, with whose advancement a greater latitude in ornamental indulgence was introduced, even while the purity of the Grecian style may be considered as existing. Compare the frontispiece of Nero with the portico of the Pantheon, and it will easily be seen how far that age had gone in the extension of ornamental enrichments‡. In the temple of Vesta at Tivoli, which from the narrowing shape of the doors and windows at top§ should seem to have been the work of a period when Greek examples were pretty closely regarded, the capitals of the columns, most exquisitely wrought, are yet more richly filled than had commonly been seen before. The temple below Trevi, which was perhaps later than

* Palladio, ch. 2.

† Palladio, p. 105. Swinb. V. 3. p. 92.

‡ Chambray's Paral. p. 72.

§ Of this practice Vitruvius has spoken, and it is confirmed among the Greeks by the temple of Minerva Polias. See Stuart's Athens, V. 2. cap. 2. pl. 15. fig. 1. p. 21.

the other, took a still larger scope of enrichment, with some novelty in the use of that which was old: in the capitals of its columns, intaglios, very beautiful indeed, were employed in singular variety; while the flutings of the shafts, no longer upright, and therefore no longer retaining their first natural idea, were wreathed in a new and singular manner. The temple of peace, as compleated by Vespasian, demonstrated no small step in the progress of decoration, which might be expected in a structure embracing indeed the Greek forms, but combining them in a different manner from what had ever been done by the Greeks.

These observations are sufficient, without extending them to those periods in which a taste for excessive enrichments prevailed over every correction of it; because that taste was now and then checked in proportion as the Grecian influence rose superior, of which some examples will inevitable fall in our way in the further progress of this subject.

So far as the circumstances of that taste have been hitherto noticed, the Romans still kept the Greeks somewhat in their view. But fancy and caprice led to bolder attempts. Vitruvius speaks* of the great contrast to the spirit and principles of the Greeks, which in his time had begun to shew itself in the use of luxuriant decorations. “A kind of chamfered work was introduced, with
“curled leaves and volutes. Candlesticks were seen sustaining
“figures. Little tender twigs, rising in scrolls from roots, contained little figures sitting upon them. Sometimes flowers
“came forth from those little twigs, and from those flowers were

* Lib. 7. c. 5.

“ seen little figures issuing in halves, some with human, and some
“ with animal heads.” Of those ornaments the entablatures in
the frontispiece of Nero, and still more abundantly those in the
baths of Dioclesian, will afford sufficient examples.

We have no objection to concur with Vitruvius in his censure
on those devices, when they are combined with the orders of archi-
tecture. At the same time we doubt whether that author had
seen their origin, and the true reason why they came to be con-
ceived and made use of by the Romans. The fact is, they sprang
from the emblematic theology received from Greece, and they are
additional proofs of the reception of that theology in Italy. Can-
dlesticks were an important article in the religious service of the
ancients, and as they were looked upon to be hallowed by that
service, and more especially by their connexion with that fire
which was symbolical of the supreme principle, so they were al-
ways dressed by some accession of figures which were also con-
sidered as symbols of that supreme principle*. Animals issuing
from particular foliages, such as the acanthus or the vine, were
profound allegories connected with the same theology, and whose
mystical sense has already been explained†. These were all the
subjects of frequent sculpture among the Greeks, and the doctrine
couched under them was revealed to the initiated in the sacred
mysteries‡. But they were never employed by the Greeks as the
external decorations of buildings, because while they were myf-
tical they were profaned, and if their mystic sense was lost, they
were ludicrous, to the common eye. There was therefore much
difference between the employment of those ideas, and the sculp-

* D'Ancarv. V. 1. p. 270. † Vol. 1. p. 264. ‡ Macrob. Sat. lib. 1. p. 141.

ture of a sacrifice, to fill up the entablature of a temple, because the last was an ordinary scene which was never in danger of being profaned. Nevertheless those ideas were made the subjects of all other bas-reliefs of a more private nature among the Greeks, of which there are some now possessed by individuals in this country *. When a taste of that kind was employed at Pompeii † in the decorations of smaller apartments, and many ages afterwards by Raphael in the chambers of the Vatican, it was going far enough, and we should not have remarked upon those uses of it had, there been no others less becoming. But when it is made a part of external designs, independent of that deeper sense which some portions of it may involve, it is wild and tumultuous; it has no natural or easy association with any spirit of the orders; it disturbs what is worthy of contemplation in those orders, by the flutter which it's subjects throw upon the mind; and it actually absorbs the attention which is due to the simplicity of design. But it's prejudice extends beyond the moment, and situation which it may occupy. For it is apt to corrupt the public taste, as all ideas are apt to do which are eccentric and ill-understood. If it is adopted where it's deeper sense is not embraced by the general mind, that use of it is absurd. If it should gain superior countenance, it's mischiefs will become widened. And sometimes that taste has been entailed, by the mere weight of it's antiquity, on other ages and countries, overpowering for a time matured knowledge, or leading astray the knowledge that was rising to maturity, until good sense and judgment recovering their natural influence have checked it's progress.

* D'Anc. V. 1. p. 270, 271.

† Swinb. V. 3. p. 151.

Improper as those things were, the Romans feeling their competency in architecture, and wishing to find their way to originality of character, were tempted to go much farther, and to conceive that they had no need to be bound altogether by the authority of the Grecian principles. Of the licences taken in this way the professional man who has studied the Temple of Peace will not need any specific examples to be adduced. And as we do not write to instruct professional men, we shall therefore leave to their consideration what may possibly be claimed as professional points. For others, to whom those minuter views are unnecessary, and who will be satisfied with an investigation of the principles and progress of architecture as a branch of philosophic art, we conceive it will be sufficient to consider those licences on this general ground, whether it be wise to innovate on the consummate principles established by the Greeks, and to leave those new examples to carry down an influence strengthened by their antiquity.

We are far from wishing to be understood, that whatever is found in the Grecian school is incapable of further improvement, and that whatever is not found in that school ought to be repudiated; although it be true that whatever is not found there undergoes at first sight a presumptive disadvantage, and although it be also true that the Romans were by no means as strict in the preservation of principle, nor did they as invariably consult the truth and reason of things, in their scheme of architecture, as the Greeks. Perhaps there was much to be said for many of the licences which they indulged; and that is the point to which we ought to look. Those licences remain to be discussed on principle, and on principle they must be tried whether they are legitimate and

fair, and worthy of being transmitted as new examples, if there be in architecture a principle necessary to sanction even great example. We know not a point more material than this to be rightly conceived, as in every age the vanity of professional men will lead them to institute new examples, which perhaps are more fit to perish in the age of their birth, than to be known by posterity.

Nor is the antiquity, which those licences may gain, sufficient to decide the matter. Moderns have not always discriminated rightly in their references to ancient authority. Considering the Romans to be ancients as well as the Greeks, we are apt to receive with equal authority what has been done in architecture by either, as the example of the ancients. And no man will say that the Romans are not to be appealed to as authorities; in fact, they are appealed to as almost the only ancient authorities, where the remains of buildings must decide, time having left to us more to contemplate in their edifices than in the older ones of the Greeks. Nevertheless there is certainly some difference to be considered between the authority which, in fact, created architecture, brought it forth from the depths of philosophic study, and matured all its principles, compositions, and measurements, and that authority which received it so matured, and acted upon it derivatively from others. There is some difference to be considered between those, whose authority is founded evermore on some principle of nature and truth, and those who were not shy of departing sometimes from those principles, in order to innovate on the practice which those principles had prescribed. Wherever therefore the practice of the Greeks can be ascertained, and especially where their practice might militate with that of the Romans, it is doing justice neither to our-

felves as men of skill, nor to architecture itself, nor to the ages that follow us, if we embrace what ancient example may have given us, without following that example to it's source. In that way we should be likely to hand down an architecture bereft of it's primary foundations, an architecture whose constitution would presently be the pretensions of taste in all who should think themselves competent to profess it. We know not that it should invariably be concluded, that after-ages, pursuing ardently the same studies as those which have gone before, will improve and meliorate what they shall so pursue. In architecture however, although it was the great emulation of the Romans, in which they succeeded best, it cannot be said that they contributed any additions to the purity of it's spirit, or essentially enlarged it's capacity. Mr. Stuart has asserted, that "in the beauties of correct style Rome never came up to "Athens*".

The licences, to which we have hitherto adverted, approached in no degree to that grand one, which dared to construct a new order, and to confound parts from orders already existing. Disciples as the Romans were of the Greeks, they were far from being so devoted to the spirit and principles by which they had been educated, as not to be urged by the thought that if the Greeks had been the inventors of those principles, they themselves should come to a trial of their own invention too; at least, their ideas of elegance and grandeur, which were none of the weakest within them, were naturally eager to blend themselves with the standing principles of an art expressly formed to produce the elegant and the grand.

* Stuart's Athens, V. 1. pref. p. 5.

Architecture is certainly more open to those licentious freedoms with its system than either painting or sculpture. Every little fillet, or string, or moulding, the shape or dress of every little member of an entablature, and more especially those parts which are meant to admit dress or shew, are very apt to be looked upon as capable of different beauty, according to the caprice of those by whom they are employed. We cannot take those liberties with either of the other arts. The principles, by which their just expression is obtained, are capable of less variation; and every meretricious attempt to innovate on them is generally fatal to those who would indulge it.

At the period to which we now refer, that of Titus, the Romans had been for more than two centuries masters of that people, who for many successions of ages had given the laws of taste to the earth. All the genius of Greece then looked up to Rome for what portion of fame was left to it. Thus engaged on a new and illustrious stage, in which all that had been most celebrated in genius lay at their feet, and they themselves were become the arbiters of taste to the world, the Romans conceived themselves called upon, in maintenance of the claims which fortune had thrown into their hands, and in a branch of art which they had always particularly emulated, to shew themselves, if not as original as those whom then they ruled, yet as not destitute of new resources in taste.

While they indulged these views, they little reflected that however their pride might be gratified by composing that which was new, they were laying a foundation for the overthrow of all established principles in the art which they so much affected to

raise. They were going to sanction by the spirit of innovation those licences, which a wanton caprice, and especially in superficial professors, would be sure at all times to embrace and enlarge without bounds. They were committing to great peril those principles of simplicity, in which true taste will ever find it's best constitution, and with which every mixture is solecism; and every degree of departure from it is a degree of approach to the barbarous. They were throwing into confusion, not easily to be calculated, those orders, whose chastity in their several classes, and comprehensive reach in the whole to provide for every settled taste, had been approved for ages, without drawing a line to determine where innovation should stop, or to discriminate between a melioration of their spirit and superficial conceit. And the issue has been such as might have been expected. Those sacred standards of the Greeks, having experienced these liberties in the hands of the Romans, have since been too often considered as no longer standards or principles, before which a novelty of principle must retire. Moderns have looked upon themselves as encouraged by ancients to devise something new. The most superficial have found it less laborious to vary, to assort, and to combine, than to maintain a regular consistency of spirit through the whole. The more able have flattered themselves that in the multitude of new attempts they might hit off a beauty which would establish their name. Thus every part and member of the orders has undergone some wild and monstrous alteration. The purity and uniformity of spirit, the wisdom and philosophy which entered into their first constitution, have been often lost in mungrel conceits, shallow and impertinent obtrusions, hardy attempts at invention, which frequently finds itself at last only able to crawl among the minuter portions, fa-

tified with new-dressing a cornice or a simple member, but incapable of reaching the general distribution of a whole, or of embracing the art in all its dimensions.

These consequences, which Vitruvius partly prognosticated from the many lesser licences taken with the rules of the Grecian orders in his time, were either not seen or not regarded by the Romans in that great instance of novelty into which they launched, when they established the composite order. That order arose at a singular period, and after a very extraordinary event. We know nothing however, of its having been exemplified in any public work before the triumphal arch which the Senate erected to Titus after his destruction of Jerusalem. No matter what was the purpose of heaven in that event; to the Romans it was a most flattering circumstance that they were able to crush the people of God, who had so long fought under the banners of the Almighty, and so long had felt the blessings of his own immediate theocracy. Their exultation may therefore be left to indulge itself with the idea of a triumphal arch; and that exultation was wound up so high, that they conceived it ought to be marked by a singular species of design, which, whether absolutely new or not at that moment, should bespeak its creation to spring originally from themselves. An order therefore, which they called composite, was employed in the structure of that arch,

It has been imagined that the architect, who conducted that arch and the whole preparations of that triumph, had attended Titus to the siege of Jerusalem, because he has so happily intro-

duced into his work the figures of the principal spoils of the temple, in which as well as in some other ornaments it has been thought that he was assisted by his own view of the interior of that temple itself*. But that is no more necessary to be supposed than that the sculptors, who raised those figures on the frieze, which seem more a-kin to Grecian than to Roman execution, were also at that siege. The same order was afterwards employed in the erection of an arch to Trajan, now called the Porta Aurea at Benevento, the intercolumniations and frieze of which are covered with bas-reliefs representing the battles and triumph of the Dacian war†. It was also employed, but in more eccentric proportions, in the Arco de Leoni at Verona‡. It is not material to be mentioned here, how often it was employed, more or less perfectly, in the lower periods of the empire. We shall only notice one further example of it, the temple of Bacchus, without the gate Viminalis at Rome, erected in some of those lower periods, the capitals of which will be found to exhibit a striking singularity, although the architrave, frieze, and cornice are not well wrought§.

The great variation aimed at in this order was in the form and constitution of its capital, which is composed of principal parts of the capitals of all the other orders. It has a quarter round as the Tuscan and Doric; volutes as the Ionic; and a double row of leaves underneath, as the Corinthian. In most of the other parts, according to the older and more approved architects who have described it, it differs but little from the Corinthian, on which it was intended to bear most closely, and

* See Chambray's Paral. p. 108.

† Chambray's Paral. p. 106, 107.

‡ Swinb. V. 2. p. 335.

§ See Palladio.

indeed to stand as a substitute for that order. In the height of its pedestal, its base, its body, and its capital it hardly differs at all from the Corinthian, according to the measures of those writers: in its entablature it differs more materially, which creates another singularity in its character. Its architrave increases over that of the Corinthian from thirty to fifty-two and a half, according to the scale of Vitruvius; and from thirty-six to forty-five, according to that of Palladio. Its frieze rises more or less above every other frieze, probably to give more room for emblematic sculptures; and to make some allowance for that, its cornice is diminished. Yet its whole height is advanced beyond that of the Corinthian. Under these circumstances its entablature appears at least, if it is not in fact, more massy; and if its capital be more decked and gay, as Palladio represents its intention to be, than the Corinthian, yet it must also be more loaded.

Lay these things together, and the propriety of employing the Composite along with other orders will soon be decided. It has been said, that it may be used in every place and on every occasion where strength and richness and beauty are required together. And so it may; but the singularity of its constitution plainly speaks that it ought to be used by itself. In every view it appears unqualified to be employed in conjunction with any other orders, and no examples of the Romans have yet appeared to gainsay this assertion. It ought not to be placed above the Corinthian, because then, as Scamozzi very justly observed, and after him Chambray, that which has more altitude, is more charged, and more massy, would stand over an order which is less in all those circumstances. It ought not to be placed be-

neath the Corinthian, whether there be other orders below or not; because although it has a general affinity to the Corinthian, yet the circumstances in which it varies do not give it any specific character, nor carry on any stage of principle founded in nature; so that it would by no means be equal in propriety to two Corinthians. For the same reason, as it carries on no stage of distinct principle, it ought not to be employed instead of the Corinthian over an Ionic. It is needless to say, that it cannot be connected with the Doric. It is a medley of all the other orders, and therefore can find no natural situation among them.

No genius was expended in the idea of that order. It conveyed no one effort of original invention, nothing new in its constitution or dress, no one circumstance supplying any link that was wanted in the chain of proportion or character throughout nature. If it be said, that the object was to throw the Ionic and Corinthian together, and of their several attributes to make one entire order; we ask, why was that necessary? Was not the delicate a natural discrimination from the strong? and was not that discrimination more naturally marked by a neat simplicity than by elegance and dress? When it became charged with these, the natural and immediate gradation was lost between that which was masculinely strong and that which was effeminately gay: besides, it was making the Ionic order burdensome in its expence, as well as incongruous in its application: after all, the object was frustrated, for all the Ionic proportions were lost in the Corinthian, and nothing was left but a simple scroll on the capital, by which a feature of its character could be distinguished.

To pick and cull, to combine, and then to call it new, is by no means invention. Neither is it necessary for a country, in order to maintain it's character of inventive genius in architecture, to form a new order. As well may we pronounce it necessary for the man of eloquence to coin new words and expressions, or for the poet to write in a measure that was never used before, in order to ensure their respective reputations. Invention, in it's most honourable idea, is not smothered nor prejudiced by acting within given rules. Within those rules the diversity of human minds may expand with the freest latitude, and they shall actually produce all that variety which flows from their different ways of thinking, but nevertheless chaste to the design, true to it's spirit, and strictly conformable to all it's views. Give the same thesis, as confined as you please, to various men of letters: every one, even while he pursues the same course of sentiment, shall treat it in a style extremely different from the others: one shall be all figurative and florid; another simple, easy, and natural; a third bold and strong. Not a feather in the wings of their invention feels itself clipped.

It is the same in the execution of the several Greek orders, although the eye that looks up catches every terminating line very much alike in the same order, and from thence might possibly receive a first impression of sameness in all it's exemplifications. But let those who have not the opportunity of consulting ancient edifices look over the various profiles of the several orders taken from those edifices by ingenious draftsmen, and the delineations of those orders as they have been minutely pursued by architects of the first character, they will find a most ample field for invention exercised in all the variety of taste that

could be brought within the principles of the order. It is not to the distribution of minuter portions that the talent of the architect is called : the distribution of a whole is before him, and all that beauty of symmetry, that harmony and union which result from the fine taste of a whole, conceived in no given form or model, nor wrought up by any prescribed ideas, but yet governed for its own greater benefit by certain rules which guard it from excess, and which are needful to discriminate the legitimate from the meretricious. In the conduct of such a plan, in the laying out and the filling up of such a design, invention has certainly no cause to consider itself cramped, or forced either to seek the devices of new orders, or to pervert the principles of those that are already established, for the excursions of its genius.

In justice to the Romans it ought nevertheless to be observed, that when they departed in the Composite order from the principles established by the Greeks, they went no further, materially, than to the form of the capital. Other authorities, therefore, than that precedent are yet to be found, before it can be admitted that the Composite may be carried further than they carried it ; before it can be admitted that every thing in architecture may be Composite. That these have been the unfortunate consequences of that precedent, we have already observed—consequences, which began to appear in the lower periods of the empire, were revived with the revival of the arts, have been since cherished either in their whole extent, or in some modification grounded on this Roman example, by every country that has wished to shine in architecture, and which at this moment give the prevailing bias of taste and opinion to nine-tenths of the architects who are most employed in the country in which we live. Nevertheless,

it was not in the Roman Composite, as at first introduced, to sanction the spirit of Composite extended to those lengths; and that spirit must be done away, or at least must relinquish its predominant bias over the studies of architects, before there will be either any regular education in the art, or any celebrity from it to the country.

The Composite, thus enrolled along with the Greek orders, did not however supplant those orders in the use and esteem of the Romans. The partiality which they had for it as an offspring of their own was not such as to displace the orders, on which they had risen into fame, and much less the Corinthian which had obtained their predilection from the earliest times. They seem to have been satisfied with that effort of their taste, or of their vanity, and with the establishment given to it in a few monuments in and out of Rome; for few indeed, comparatively speaking, appear to have been the structures executed in that order, or they are few which time has suffered to come to our knowledge.

Neither were the Romans seduced at once by that example of departing from the purity of the Greek orders into a more degenerate taste. For a century after the reign of Titus that purity of Grecian style was conspicuous. The proofs of it in the reigns of Trajan, and Adrian, and the Antonines are abundant and satisfactory, notwithstanding all the injuries of time. Besides the temples and other structures at Rome in those reigns, which were all of them as worthy to entertain the best architects of Greece as one of them * was worthy of delighting the Persian

* The temple of Trajan. Palladio, lib. 4. c. 2. Ammian. Marcell. lib. 26. Nardini Rom. Antiq. p. 126.

architect Hormifda, let the provinces shew whether less taste was bestowed on them. The two temples at Nîmes, which have been supposed to be the work of Antoninus Pius, because he was a native of that city, but which in fact were raised by Plotina the wife of Trajan, were noble examples of the purity in architecture which was maintained in that age*. At Dugga or Thugga, along the river Bagrada in Africa, now stands a large Corinthian temple of Parian marble, erected, as we infer from it's inscriptions, by Adrian in memory of Trajan, and for his Apotheosis: this temple is executed in the very best style, it's cornice is highly ornamented, and the sculptures employed on it are exquisite†. At Spaitla in the kingdom of Tunis the taste which was maintained in the time of the Antonines has left it's memorial in two Corinthian temples, and what is more extraordinary, in one of the Composite order, all of which are for the most part entire: in the exquisite workmanship of the last is found a most beautiful Composite capital, which is thought to be the only perfect one existing‡.

If it be observed as to the age of Trajan, that much of it's celebrity in architecture should be put to the account of the Greek Apollodorus: that must be granted, and it is not improbable that in his natural partiality to his countrymen he might get them selected for all the branches of work under his direction, by which means Rome might then appear another age of Greece. Yet it must be recollected that Rome did not then want any borrowed characters, for Detrianus was ready in the next reign to fill the place of Apollodorus, and his abilities

* Nardini, p. 407.

† Bruce's Trav. Introd. p. 23.

‡ Ibid. p. 31.

were found in the greatest part of Adrian's works, particularly in his mole, and in the Elia bridge, now the bridge of St. Angelo. If Detrianus was not continued under the Antonines, and it is most likely that he was, if he were living, it is plain from their works that others were not wanting equal to him, and to those who had gone before him.

After that period, when degeneracy of mind became united with the Imperial authority, not in a single instance or two, like that of Nero and Domitian, but in a succession of degeneracies; not in an age when general taste was advancing to its meridian, but when by those successive degeneracies it was verging to its wane; there was nothing in the circumstances of the empire, which could be favourable to a purity of skill in any one of the fine arts more than in another. They were called for indeed, as passion and caprice gave the occasion; and immense were the sums that were now and then wasted, to corrupt farther the taste which was declining fast enough by the tendency of general circumstances. In architecture they kept to the general outline of Grecian principles, for they knew no other; but that outline was sometimes strangely filled up, and even bereft of all its natural proportions. This must be understood with some qualification of circumstances, which were now and then fortunately prevalent, amidst the caprices of declining taste, to attain the spirit of better models. We are to consider architecture, like every other lamp of science, and like the real lamp which burns before us, not as sinking at once into the socket, but as mingling efforts of brightness in the glimmerings with which it expires. The arch of Severus, however fallen in its sculptures, was more perfect in its architecture: but his eptizone was a

whim*. The circus of Caracalla continued the declension which was begun. By the time we reach the period of Aurelian, all proportions were greatly dissipated. Aurelian was a great builder, and particularly in the provinces; he rebuilt Orleans, and founded Dijon. Among many temples erected by him; he built a most magnificent one to the sun, of which frequent mention is made in history. His monuments abound in Africa; and along with numerous others of various dates in the empire, they are found in a degree of preservation oftentimes entire, which is surprizing after the devastations committed there by the Vandals. But perhaps those devastations were directed more against sculptures than walls. It was probably some additional rescue from their fury, that in that quarter Aurelian was addicted to the Doric, which was freest from sculpture. But all those Dorics were long and disproportioned without exception, of which examples are to be found at Lambefa, now Tezzonte, and at Lebeda the Leptis magna of the ancients, three days journey from Tripoli†.

Dioclesian was not less fond of building than any of his predecessors; it was a passion of expence which he indulged even to folly. Nicomedia, his ordinary place of residence, rivalled Rome in the flateliness of some of its buildings. His hot baths, the remains of which are still to be seen at Rome, and which are with much exaggeration compared by Ammianus Marcellinus to a province, actually appeared as a little town in extent. He revived indeed the lamp of architecture sinking in the socket; but the purity of taste in some circumstances did not keep pace with the general skill in design, and with the powers of geome-

* See Nardini, p. 406.

† Bruce's Trav. Introd. p. 29. 38.

trical knowledge, displayed in those structures. The passion which the Romans had for ornaments was irresistible; and it was not likely to be diminished, when that which was meretricious in general taste was daily gaining ground. In none of the great edifices, to which the empire had given birth, not excepting the proudest of those which had risen from the vanity of Nero, was there ever seen such a profusion of ornaments as that which enriched some of the entablatures, particularly the Corinthian, in the baths of Dioclesian*. It is in vain to think of a richness in architectural dress beyond them. And they have the effect, which that excessive richness never fails to have; they actually disturb the proportions, produce confusion among the parts, and rob the eye of all the satisfaction arising from symmetry and order in design. What the nature of those enrichments were, we have already had occasion to speak. And let the objections to them on other grounds be ever so strong, they were censurable enough as eccentricities to the common observer, and as expressions of that false taste which had been growing in the first days of the empire, and of which the Romans never could be cured.

Of the state of architecture under Constantine it is difficult to speak with precision, because we really know not how much he borrowed from the materials of ancient buildings; and with respect to sculptures, no man borrowed more. His arch is well known to have been a mere rendezvous for the larger sculptures taken from that of Trajan. And he might equally avail himself of ancient materials from those edifices which were

* See Chambray's Paral. p. 75.

in ruins, or which he chose to strip; as Vespasian carried away columns from Nero's golden house to the Temple of Peace, from whence they have been since removed and placed before the Temple of Santa Maria Maggiore. Constantine's baptistery at Rome is the only subject material to be looked at in this question: and Palladio was of opinion that it was made up from the ruins of ancient edifices, because the work is so excellent*. It is a fine example of the Composite order; the columns of porphyry, the base Attic and Ionic, the capitals excellently wrought, all the members beautifully executed with rare inventions, and very fine intaglios; nothing can be better carved than the whole ornaments. If that edifice had not been erected within so short a space of time as about twenty-five years after the baths of Dioclesian, in which time we can hardly suppose the powers of executing the ornaments in those baths to have been extinct and gone, there would not have been much room for any other opinion on the subject than that which Palladio has given. But there is a piece of evidence in the baptistery itself, which shews that in some things the architects of that day had not borrowed from the works of former ones, and that they were capable both of thinking for themselves in a new case, and of executing well what they adopted. We are not going to commend the thing adopted, but the skill with which it was executed.

Before the idea, to which we now allude, was thought of, whenever the columns of a portico fell short of their destined length, pedestals under the bases had been adopted to supply

* See Palladio's plates of that Baptistery.

the deficiency. Palladio thinks that the first instance of that kind appeared in a Corinthian temple now remaining at Scifi in Umbria, previous to which, he says, in all the ancient temples the columns of the portico came down to the ground, and had no pedestals *. But in this he must be mistaken ; for in the portico at Athens, commonly supposed to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Olympius, there were pedestals from the bases of the Corinthian columns to the ground†. Such, however, was the mode pursued by the ancients, whenever the columns wanted length. In the baptistery of Constantine that defect was remedied by a new and singular thought, if we are not mistaken in supposing it to be the first precedent of the kind, of which we know nothing to the contrary. On the bases of the Loggia foliages were formed, supporting at some height from the ground the shafts of the columns, or at least concealing what they wanted below, and so making up for their shortness. How far that device was founded on any of those principles which are warranted in the nature of things, and which therefore would have been embraced by the Greeks, is another consideration, and is not material to our present purpose, although Palladio was so satisfied with it that he adopted the invention for the columns and ornaments of a church-door in Venice. It is enough for us to observe, that those foliages were executed in a very masterly manner ; if that may pass for an argument, that the skill shewn in that baptistery was not altogether compiled from ancient materials.

At the same time this no way disturbs the fact, that archi-

* Palladio, p. 105.

† See Stuart's Athens, Vol. 1. ch. 5. pl. 3. p. 43.

teature was then declining. If it be considered that this art depends for all its execution on the theory of proportions, although for its effect as a work of genius it depends also on the theory of taste, it will easily be apprehended that architects with fine examples before them, and with good abilities, may acquit themselves well in the administration of an order, and in all that results from the theory of proportions. If it be considered further, that the sculpture employed in architecture differs extremely from that talent of sculpture which pursues the passions and affections of higher character as well as the mere truth of proportions, it will easily be conceived that where the latter is fallen into great declension, as in the æra of Constantine, the former still may be exercised respectably, and give to architecture great advantages.

Under these distinctions the age of that emperor might produce in perfect workmanship the Corinthian order in his arch, and the Composite in his baptistery, while neither of those examples might give to that age an equality with that of Trajan in the great scope of genius and taste displayed through the comprehensive whole of a design. This, much, however, we gather with some certainty, that architecture had not lost all its taste while Constantine remained in Rome*. And that was undoubtedly owing in a great degree to the geometrical constitution of the art, which enables it to be carried on by the progress of its proportions, when the other arts which do not depend on those principles are gone. What was its fate under the Eastern empire, and after the removal of Constantine from Rome, we must wait for that æra to determine.

* Vafari, *proem.* p. 68.

But before we close our present view, there are two points in which the general character of the Romans as architects remains to be noticed. The one is, the manner in which they disposed their private mansions. In this circumstance they blindly followed the Greeks, where the growing experience of ages, the best school for domestic convenience and pleasure, should naturally have suggested improvement. Like the Greeks they occupied an immense space in their houses, while their habits of living were not those of the Greeks, which became a reason for that space. At the same time their houses were neither well contrived, nor always pleasant. They were mostly sacrificed to porticos, galleries, terraces, and square courts; very often to the want of proper light, and to a seclusion from the observation of others; always to the want of that plan and design which knows how to connect convenience with elegance, to provide against the effects of climate without losing the satisfactions of situation, and even to reconcile a taste for privacy with the full enjoyment of light, and air, and elevation. These things they missed, either because they sacrificed to pride, conceiving that greatness was best shewn by ample space, or because their architects had never sat down to plan the best arrangement of dwellings, intent only or chiefly on external design. These observations are illustrated by a late traveller in two villas at Pompeii, which must have been Roman buildings, and one of which was not finished at the time when both were buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in the reign of Titus. They are represented as the best examples of private dwellings in that country*.

* See Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 153.

The other point in which the Roman architects claim to be considered is more to their advantage. They were fully informed in those radical principles, which are indispensibly necessary to the raising of great edifices that shall both endure, and approve themselves as objects of just observation, for ages. They were therefore masters of geometry and perspective, whatever was the portion of general study occupied by those branches of science in ancient Rome. This is plain from the language of Vitruvius alone. For whether or no he be considered as delivering the elements of architecture pursued by the Greeks, it is evident that those elements were considered as important when he wrote. Having mentioned the necessity of geometry and optics, he says, “ every architect must be competent to draw his “ designs in plans, and elevations, geometrically and in perspective views, shewing two sides at once, the horizontal lines “ of which tend to points in the horizon*”. From a passage in Cicero†, where he speaks of Archimedes in words which undoubtedly carry a great flight of his professional studies, calling him “ humilem homuncionem,” it has been asserted by the Abbé Fraguire‡, and after him by Monsieur Rollin§, that geometry and the speculative sciences never gained ground among the Romans, who valued no studies so much as those which related to government and civil policy. And it may be true that the Roman orator himself, although somewhat fond of metaphysics, had no taste for the demonstrative sciences, and for those sublime speculations which do not rest in simple and abstracted ideas, but descend to matter, to sensible and corporeal things, to this

* Vitruv. lib. 1. c. 1.

† Tusc. Quæst. lib. 5. n. 64. 66.

‡ Memoires Acad. Insc. Vol. 2.

§ Anc. Hist. Vol. 10. p. 58.

real world itself, and to those mechanics whose operations are made more evident and familiar by being applied experimentally to things of real existence and real use. These might possibly appear too humble and vulgar for the refined disquisitions of his mind, and of all other minds like his, pursuing the bubbles of eloquence, or intent on other theories (when on theories they were intent) which were better calculated, as they thought, to raise a state, but which were found in the end incapable of furnishing a single prop to its decline; while the theories of the geometrician have been able to render ineffectual all the thunders of hostile invasion, and to avert the ruin of his country from every quarter in which the force of fleets and armies was brought against it.

Let the case have been as it might as to Cicero himself, or as to any others polished like him, assuredly the sciences of geometry and perspective did gain very strong ground among the Roman architects, at least. Go to their architecture itself, and see their profound managements of parts illustrating those sciences. The Roman builders of the frontispiece* of Nero have already been named. It was a striking example of that grandeur, which arises from a deep and accurate skill in geometry and perspective. The extraordinary projection of the entablature, whose corona carries it's jet a great way beyond the modillions, would naturally make the columns, which are set further within the plan than any of the other members, appear weak and surcharged. The architect therefore, rather than derange his design by increasing their proportions, judiciously embraced the *pycnostylos* of the

* See a profile of this elevated in perspective, Chambray's Paral. p. 73.

Greeks, and set them nearer to one another. Among the members of the entablature which are most powerfully affected by distance, those whose superficies is most flexuous and circulary receive the most sensible alteration. Of that kind is the gula or ogee, which composes the crown of the cornice: when beheld from beneath, the real proportion of this would become extremely altered by the apparent increase of the distance. The architect therefore wisely regulated it's measure in the instance before us, not by it's own rule, but by that which optics prescribed.

There are reasons why we may speak of the very grand and elegant Doric entablature discovered at Albano* as a Roman work, when we consider not only the novelty but the richness of almost all it's parts, so unlike any Doric design that was ever known to come from Greeks. No hands could produce a greater master-piece of grandeur, which, besides it's own general composition, is also wonderfully aided by the effects of genuine perspective.

The Temple of Peace affords other reasons, on which we have already touched, for it's being considered as the work of Roman artists. The claim has been left to them by those who have thought that in that edifice might be discovered some marks of declining art. Whatever peculiarity of taste or management it conveyed, and many it certainly did exhibit, the clearest proofs are afforded that the architects of that age were admirably skilled in the sciences we have mentioned. Their geometry was abun-

* See a profile of this elevated in perspective, Chambray's Paral. p. 25.

dantly evident in the whole management of the abutments, which were perfectly simple, and yet compleatly effectual through the various parts of the edifice, not by an indiscriminate distribution of strength, but in such different proportions as the difference of pressure made necessary*. The mighty nave was abutted by the ailes, and the ailes by the tribunals, and little rooms without. For that abutment, however, to the arch of the ailes, the pillars were provided with great piles judiciously thrown behind them, which gave them a thickness backward that left no necessity of their being cramped with vast irons across the aile to the outward wall, as was afterwards done in Gothic fabrics, where the same natural strength had not been given to the pillars. The roof also required some powerful abutment to its weight; and that was artfully given to it by the slope-walls between the windows, which answered to the half-frontispieces of the ailes, and which probably gave the first thought to the flying buttresses used afterwards in Gothic fabrics.

Of his skill in optics the architect of that temple gave a very extraordinary example. The corona is so essential a part in every cornice, that it gives to the whole not only its name but its beauty; for by its projection not only a grandeur is obtained, which could not so well arise from a flat surface, but a salutary light and shadow is created, which serves the different members essentially at a distance. In that temple, however, the lights stood level with the cornice; so that if it had been continued, not only the descent of the light would have been obscured by the projection, but the natural effect of the corona would have been lost, for

* Wren's Parent. p. 362.

it's hanging face would have been foreshortened to nothing to the eye which beheld it underneath. Impelled by those reasons, which were certainly of the first consequence to the best effect of his design, he boldly left out that member; and in so doing he also saved an immense expence, which would have been thrown away, inasmuch as it is the soffite which gave the effect, and not the upright thickness.

It is impossible to suppose such immense masses of structure undertaken, and maintaining their duration more or less entire, and their great truth of effect, through such long periods of time, without the most accurate information in the sciences of which we have spoken.

Having said so much on the Temple of Peace, which stands so prominent to our notice among Roman works, we would make one observation more on it's general design, before we close this part of our inquiry, because that design appears to bring the Romans most closely to those studies, which in Greece had formed every public edifice to a sentiment. Follow that design through all it's distinguishing circumstances, and you may as well conceive that you have the properties, and characters, and effects of peace before you. It was easy of access, and open: it carried an humble front, but embraced wide: it was luminous and pleasant: content with an internal greatness, it despised an invidious appearance of that height, of which it might otherwise boast; but rather fortifying itself on every side, it rested secure on a square and simple basis*.

* Wren's Parent. p. 363.

BOOK VI.
EASTERN EMPIRE.

CHAP. I.

Byzantium filled with Grecian sculptures, when it took the name of Constantinople—all the best works of art brought into that new metropolis of the empire—the management of Constantine between the destruction of paganism and the preservation of art—the recovery of painting baffled by many circumstances—Mosaics more prevalent, yet declining—sculpture superior to other branches, yet far from refined—Christianity a new field of encouragement to artists—a mistaken notion that St. Luke was a painter—the edifices of Constantine adorned with the figures of Christian characters—the arts affected by the turns of public affairs—Constantine's zeal to support them not followed by his son Constantius—a new emulation excited by Theodosius the Great—his column and Tetrasceles—the vast expence then bestowed on sculpture—the reign of Arcadius marked by collections more than by new works—public affairs unfavourable till the reign of Justinian—the pompous descriptions given of the arts in his reign to be qualified—a fine proof of Mosaic in that reign—the general character of Justinian a source of elevation to the arts, and to the empire—their great declension under Heraclius, with whom ceased new sculp-

tures—some attempts in painting afterwards—strange effects of some religious paintings, or of the feelings of the age—Mosaics regularly declining—the total ruin of the arts hastened by the convulsions of the empire, by the rise of Mahomet, and by the fury of Iconoclasts—the successful ingenuity of Leo a bishop—the indomitable attachment of the Monk Lazarus to his art—a short sketch of the rudeness of painting and sculpture from the ninth to the eleventh century—the obligations which the modern world is under to the Greek monks for the preservation of the arts.

A NEW scene arises with the birth of Constantinople; if that can be called it's birth, which gave a new name, and new extensions, to a city already most ancient and illustrious in history. Byzantium, originally a colony of the Megarians, and as such participating originally of the Grecian spirit, had enjoyed a well-earned fame in days of high antiquity from it's first founder Byzas the son of Neptune*. It flourished greatly in those times when art and ingenuity were in the highest estimation throughout Greece. If Rhodes could boast of her three thousand monuments, Old Byzantium could speak with equal truth of the treasures of art deposited within her walls, neither fewer in their number, nor less precious in their value. Dionysius speaking of some of their pagan temples, tells us of large collections of fine paintings, the curious relics of preceding times, and of statues no less finished and elaborate, with which they were beautified.

* Petrus Gyllius Antiq. Constantin. B. 1. ch. 1. B. 4. ch. 11.

Beyond such scattered accounts as these, it is to be lamented that no historian has recorded the antiquities of Byzantium before it was destroyed by the emperor Severus in revenge for the assistance it had given to Niger against himself. The very terrible and raging conflagrations also, which have so frequently laid it waste, have been the spoilers of all that was valuable in its antiquity, and that was left undestroyed by the hands of its bitterest enemies. We must therefore be contented to collect, with much imperfection, from scattered testimonies those treasures of ancient art with which Byzantium was once enriched. From the time of its restoration by Severus, when he had become reconciled, to the period in which it fell with the remains of the Roman empire into other hands, we are led with more connected precision into all the circumstances of art which arose there, by Petrus Gyllius a writer of the first credit in the sixteenth century, who has given a full account of Constantinople from his own view—by an unknown author of the history of that city—and by Pancirolus's notes on the *notitia utriusque imperii*.

When Constantine came to fix the seat of empire there, he found the city filled with Grecian sculptures. These could not have been brought from Rome either by Severus or any other emperor, for the habit of stripping that metropolis of its treasures in the arts was not begun till another metropolis was found to supplant it in the seat of empire. They must therefore have been the ancient pledges of Grecian skill committed to Byzantium. Many of them were known to be among the best productions of that skill, and some of them were expressly

handed down as the works of Phidias*. When we enumerate, in the bagnios called Zeuxippum†, the brazen and marble statues of those renowned characters, who had been famous for wisdom, poetry, eloquence and courage through the world, and when we read of the perfection ascribed to those statues as “the most elaborate workmanship of antiquity, wanting only a soul to animate them”; no matter whether Severus originally built, or only repaired and enlarged, that range of structures; his age can derive no fame from any of those sculptures, nor can his concern in those buildings create a doubt from what quarter those sculptures came.

It was indeed the ambition of Constantine to strip not only Rome, but as St. Jerome declared, almost every city of its curiosities and ornaments to adorn the new metropolis of his empire. Zozomen says, that by his command every thing valuable in the ancient temples under his government, and particularly all the brazen statues of the best workmanship, were brought to Constantinople, and remained there in the public ways, in the Hippodrom, and in the palace, down to the time in which he wrote‡. In that general sweep it appears that little or no discrimination was made among what were excellent; and that Constantine, although devoted to the cross, carried away deities, as well as heroes and the muses, with which he adorned his new palace§; horses and combatants with which the Hippodrom was embellished||; and other general figures which gave ornament to other structures.

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 18. lib. 3. c. 8. Tzetzes Var. Hist. † Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 7. Pancirolus's Notes on Notitia utr. Imp. 2d. ward. Cedrenus.

‡ Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 18.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid. lib. 2. c. 11.

There seems at first sight a kind of inconsistency respecting those deities, till by reflecting further we come to reconcile the whole together; for Eusebius says, when Constantine had seated himself in Byzantium, he cleared the temples of all the precious statues of their gods, in which the Byzantines had gloried for ages, and exposed them by way of ridicule in the most public places of the city *. Yet he himself had increased the number of those deities by many statues which he had brought from Rome and elsewhere. Why then had he brought them, if he meant them to be despised? Undoubtedly he had brought them as models of art, and he held them up in contempt as deities. We presume, he was not aware when he brought them, that they would feed the flame of paganism; or he might conceive that he could soon extinguish that flame, and yet preserve the works which he respected. And we may suppose that he found that flame too strong, and his intended compromise between the destruction of paganism and the preservation of art too difficult to be managed at once. That the former was strong, there is no doubt; for, among other innumerable instances, a Hercules, which was brought from Rome, became the object of divine worship by the Byzantines, who offered sacrifices to it as a god†. And that the latter was a contemplation really entertained by that emperor is no less true; for on the top of the porphyry pillar, which he had brought from Rome, he placed for his own statue one that had been brought from Athens, the matchless work of Phidias, and originally designed for Apollo: having given to it a new inscription, a globe with a cross fixed on it in the right hand, and some little alteration in the head; and having fastened the

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 11.

† Ibid. lib. 2. c. 19.

whole, as he believed himself, or prevailed on others to believe, with some of the nails employed in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, he christened anew by the name of Constantinus that figure which had before been worshipped as Apollo*.

If it were true, as a German orator personally addressing him in a panegyric asserted, “that Apollo was his favourite god among the pagan divinities; that he himself bore a resemblance of character to that god, who, as the ancient poets have sung, deserved the empire of the world; and that he might even behold his own personal likenesses in that deity, being gay and youthful like Apollo, like him salutary, like him a personable and beautiful prince †;” if those flatteries became his real sentiments, yet was not that the only evidence of his studying the compromise abovementioned by converting an heathen idol into a new character of his own day. Instances occur, in which he embraced the use of an heathen idol, without any application to a new character by a change of name. We do not mean that any such idol was embraced by him for the purposes of devotion, but rather of political influence, which would nevertheless have been more consistently let alone. In the chariot of the sun he placed a statue made by his own order, which was called “the fortune of the city.” That statue, on great festivals, was set up with a cross on its head in the senate-house, and was the same to which Julian afterwards, taking it in its real character, sacrificed in public‡.

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 3. c. 3. Pancirolus on Notit. utr. Imp. 6th ward. Niceph. Eccl. Hist. lib. 4. c. 8.

† Petr. Gyll. lib. 3. c. 3.

‡ Ibid. lib. 2. c. 23.

In those instances Constantine seems to have been led by an unguarded veneration for the works of art, or by an unguarded imitation of things which had prevailed in Rome. Most certainly it was his desire to extinguish the habits of pagan worship, although he could never think of striking at the whole at once, nor of crushing them all in his own time. When, therefore, he cleared the pagan temples in Byzantium of the statues of their gods, and left others standing in other situations under other names, or under their own without intending them to be worshipped, we must consider him as beginning to banish from the places of devotion the principles of false religion, at the same time that he did not wish to banish from the minds of the people the principles of genuine taste in the works of art.

Probably he soon found it necessary to go further than the ridicule to which he had exposed those statues of heathen deities; and in that necessity perhaps we may best account for the burying of those numerous statues of Grecian deities, amounting to more than seventy, which were discovered on one side of the church of St. Sophia, when Justinian began to rebuild it*. These do not appear to have been cast into the earth as ruins, because they were again set up by that emperor, not in temples, but in various parts of the city. If an equal or greater number of the statues of Christian princes were found at the same time, let it be remembered that the reign of Julian the apostate had intervened, who might be induced, as he undoubtedly was, by the influence of paganism to do the same things in its behalf, which

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 5..

Constantine by the influence of Christianity had done to overthrow the other.

Let the motives of Constantine have been what they might with respect to those works of art which exhibited the deities of the heathens, every testimony concurs to shew that nothing was nearer to his heart than the giving a new elegance to his new metropolis, and making Constantinople to rise in efforts of ingenuity, which for a long time had not been known to Byzantium. It was, nevertheless, impossible for the plans, which his extraordinary zeal had formed, to be accomplished without great talents in all the branches of design. And where should those talents be had, commensurate to his own views or his hopes? We have already seen in what situation the arts were left in Rome.

The pencil had nothing to give him, unless new powers could be raised immediately by new encouragements. In Rome all those encouragements had been expended, and had seen the talents of the painter languish with themselves. It remained only for the new theatre of arts, which Constantine was forming, to prove whether painting was capable of a resurrection; and if it should be any more spoken of in the ancient world. He gave that proof the fairest trial. He called forth that art by every encouragement in his power. In order to bring within his view all the portions of abilities that were dedicated to it, his ordinances proclaimed the most ample and decided protection of their profession. He freed painters and their families not only from all taxes and tributes, but from all expences of lodgings. And when he had thus brought into his new meridian all that could be in-

duced to embrace his patronage, he did not fail to place before them the means of shewing the extent of their talents.

Those endeavours of the prince naturally gave a spur to emulation. To be called into new action was itself a degree of fame, for which the pencil would strive, whatever its capacities might be. And had the reign of Constantine been longer than it was, or had it been followed with equal spirit in the fine arts by those who next succeeded him, no reasonable question can be made but the latent sparks of genius in painting might have been raised from their embers, in Greece at least, to that life and strength which high and regular encouragements have never failed to produce. But that genius was then called forth under many disadvantages, which were too powerful for all the zeal of Constantine in the period of his reign to counterbalance. It was called forth on a sudden, after a long and tedious slumber, without any preparation to awaken its faculties, and to give it the means of feeling them aright.

In that state of slumber a degenerated taste, the natural consequence of the want of enterprize, had taken possession of the momentary returns of action; and where such a taste has once become fixed, it is not the finest examples, nor the best encouragements to profit by them, which can speedily divest it of its hold. In proportion as the powers of the pencil had declined in time past, another species of art, which falsely took the name of painting, had risen in its place: we mean the painting in Mosaic; which in almost all situations may be marked to have gained ground, where either the powers of the pencil had not been much known, or had been considerably lost. The ancient

Gauls, who knew nothing of painting, employed Mosaics in compartments on the cielings and insides of their temples, of which the famous one called Vasso at Clermont in Auvergne afforded a curious example*. By the time that Aurelian came to the government of the empire, this species of painting was become greatly cultivated, and far better executed than any other. The fine example of it then given at Rome has already been mentioned†. But in the age of Constantine it had fallen into declension, and was no longer executed with the merit which it had obtained in preceding times. This was visible in all the works of that kind which were then done in the church of St. John of Lateran, in that of St. Agnes, and in other churches at Rome‡.

The compleatest evidence of Mosaic, which time has left to our knowledge, in a building erected by Constantine himself, is in that circular part of the temple of the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, which environs the exterior sepulchre itself; taking it for granted, as we conceive ourselves warranted to do, that this part of that great fabric remains as it was first erected in the time of Constantine. Between the upper gallery and the top of the building are a number of niches, filled with the pictures of saints in Mosaic. These are represented by Sandys, who viewed them in A.D. 1611, as having never possessed much merit, notwithstanding some injuries by which they were defaced; for he says, that “they were full-faced, and flat, unheightened by shadows;” he further adds a most important remark, which throws more light on the general character of Greek paintings in those days than

* Greg. Tur. lib. 8. c. 15. Sulp. Sever. dial. lib. 3. c. 9. et. seq. Relig. des Gaul. lib. 1. c. 15. † Anc. Uni. Hist. Vol. 15. p. 46c. ‡ Monier of Paint. p. 51. 57.

we can easily obtain from any other evidences, telling us that
 “ the style in which those Mosaics were done, full-faced, and flat,
 “ and unheightened with shadows, is *according to the manner of*
 “ *the Greeks in their paintings at those times**.”

The Mosaic which was done on the roof of the much-famed Chalcat, or house of entrance into the palace at Constantinople, and which from the scope of it's subjects makes so splendid a figure on paper as we read it in Procopius, and after him in Petrus Gyllius†, was evidently not done by Constantine, whether the palace erected by him was on the same spot, and surrounded by the same vestibule, or not, because that Mosaic represents the glories of Justinian, the triumphant return of his general Belisarius, the joy of his army, and the congratulations of the empress and senate. If therefore that Mosaic were more meritorious in it's execution than any which were done in the age of Constantine, it is what might be expected from longer and more constant cultivation.

Under all those circumstances we may easily conceive the disadvantages with which the higher exercise of the pencil must meet the encouragements held forth to it by Constantine. It could hardly be expected to rise to any eminent stages of it's pristine perfection, although the activity to which he called it naturally gave it improvements, and a ground on which it might have been renovated to fame, had the establishment of that fame been equally the object of those who came after him. From his

* Sandys's Trav. p. 129. 132.
 plates of *brass* gilded.

† So called, because it was covered with

‡ Lib. 2. c. 18.

patronage, nevertheless, was derived this valuable advantage to the arts and to his memory, that the fate of painting, which had been decided in Rome, became longer suspended in Constantinople.

Were it possible to procure a correct copy of that antique picture of the resurrection, which, Sandys * says, hung up, and may still hang, in the interior room which contains the holy tomb itself at Jerusalem, if it is yet maintained there in tolerable preservation, it might perhaps be depended on as a proof of the powers possessed by the pencil in that age which gave birth to the edifice itself; a fair proof it would certainly be as an historical subject; and we see no reason why it should not be taken as a proof of that antiquity, since it is more probable that it was introduced into that private and sacred situation at first than at any subsequent period. Sandys has spoken of it not only as such an antique picture, but as a good one. Abating however for the fervour with which his feelings were confessedly impressed upon the spot, it may possibly have some portions of merit; it is not likely that an obscure painter would have been employed for that purpose; but at least it is reasonable to suppose that if no other record of its date is retained, the local tradition of it has not been lost through the hand of the Latin monks, to whom that part of the temple belongs.

If the quantity of sculptures carried on in Constantinople, if the life and spirit which pervaded that employment, if the eulogium passed on those works of art by some of the Byzantine

* Sandys's Trav. p. 130.

historians, may be received as testimonies of their merit, we should then conclude that sculpture was not as unfavourable to the views of Constantine as painting, and that it had gathered new powers by it's migration from the west to the east. There can be no doubt but the enlivening patronage of it's new meridian produced a new vigour. Whatever had become of the art of casting large statues in the later periods of Rome, or whether from the mere want of employment it had rarely been seen, most certainly it was brought into surprising action at Constantinople. For scarcely in any part or period of the ancient world can we be led by history to the conception of more numerous and state-ly works in sculpture, particularly in bronze, and sometimes in silver, than are presented to us in all the quarters of that city, commencing with the age of it's first emperor, and continued through many succeeding ones till the art itself became the object of persecution. Whoever will follow the narrative of Petrus Gyllius through all the wards of that city, will be apt to imagine that Pausanias is leading him by the hand through the sculptures of Athens, or Junius through those of the world. The forum of Constantine, the forum Augusteum, the Imperial palaces, the Imperial walks, the porticos, the Chalca, and above all the Hippodrom, not to mention the temples old and new, nor to speak at all of the various collections of antiques, were so filled with statues and other sculptures, the works of Constantine and his successors, that we are naturally led to conclude, what in truth was the case, that of all the fine arts, sculpture was that with which they were most pleased, and on which they bestowed the greatest study. We must nevertheless remember that the age of Constantine, although nearer to the ages of purity, was itself a declining age, and much more those which were still later

in time. Allowing for all the meliorating effects of a spirited patronage, the nature of things was not wholly to be controuled, declension was not to be raised at once into strength, nor the want of taste into purity.

The writers who have made us acquainted with those works of art, and who by their language would lead us to suppose that the nature of things was at once counteracted in the new feat of empire by the cure of that declension which had preceded the age of Constantine, must be read in that respect with caution; they must be considered as historians, but perhaps it was the least part of their character to be critics in the arts. Or if they were, they would see with those eyes which were given to the age around them; their notions of taste would be such as were derived from the taste which they had seen produced: they would speak of the works which came forth in their own times, or near them, as the Florentines spoke in exultation over the first picture of Cimabué, which they conceived to be wonderful, because they had seen no better. Even Petrus Gyllius, who flourished in the age of Leo X. if he had studied the fine arts as much as the antiquities of literature, and if his mission from Francis I. into Italy and Greece had been to collect works of art as well as ancient manuscripts, cannot be supposed to have beheld them with accuracy of taste at a time when hardly any of those antiques were recovered, by the study of which that accuracy of taste has chiefly been attained by the moderns. If other authorities were not sufficient to shew that with all the encouragements given to sculpture in the age of Constantine, it cannot be considered as affording any models of art, the conversation which is recorded to have passed between Constantius the son and successor of Constantine

and Hormisdas the Persian architect, is decisive on the point. Surveying the brazen horse in the forum of Trajan at Rome, along with the superb buildings adjacent, Constantius said that “his utmost wish would be, to find abilities in his empire which could execute such another sculpture as that”; when he had some scores of brazen horses on the columns, and in the Hippodrom, of Constantinople. Hormisdas’s reply did not mend the matter much, when he observed, with no little vanity intermixed, that “before the emperor could produce such another horse, a proper stable should be provided—and then he himself must build it *”.

The encouragements, with which Constantine was enabled to keep up the powers of art around him, received a very important strength and increase from the subjects of holy writ, which then opened a new and extensive field for the encouragement of ingenious talents. In those powerful and affecting histories, in all the various scenes arising from the scope of divine revelation, wider and more attractive interests were disclosed to the views of the pencil, ever guided before by the hands of heathens, who were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel†, who counted the doctrines of the gospel foolishness‡, and who lived without God in the world§. Constantine gave full effect to the zeal which as a new convert he felt. The arts both of painting and sculpture were fully employed in the service of Christianity, and not of Christianity only, but of the older revelation. Eusebius en-

* Ammian. Marcell. lib. 26. Nardini Rom. Antiq. p. 126. Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 14.

† Epist. to the Ephes. cap. ii. v. 12.

‡ 1st Corinth. cap. i. v. 23.

§ Ephes. ubi sup.

larged much in commendation of that emperor for the opportunities he took of making the arts contributory to useful instruction, while they decorated the city. Thus, says he, “ the
“ fountains were adorned by sculptural skill with the emblems
“ of a good pastor, well known to those who understand the
“ sacred writings; and among other attentions of that kind
“ you might see the history of Daniel and the lions figured in
“ brass, and shining with plates of gold *”.

It was natural for those arts to direct their attention not only to lessons and events, but to those great characters from whom both had flowed. They seized with rapture, as well they might, the representation of those chosen apostles, who planted the gospel through the world at the expence of their own lives—of those first disciples and martyrs, who helped forward that glorious work not less by their death than their labours—and, above all, of that divine person, whom to view in the well-selected traits by which the imagination of the artist would approach to the expression of that “ human form divine”, has ever been the highest of contemplative enjoyments; but to behold him in any assured traits of likeness would justify, we do not hesitate to say, nay, would command, the internal adoration of all enlightened minds to all eternity.

When we touch this point, we cannot refrain from interposing a momentary stop to our argument. Whether or no the age of Constantine was blessed with the advantage we have last mentioned, we cannot pronounce with certainty. It should

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 11.

rather seem probable, that notwithstanding the contempt in which Jesus Christ was held by the Jews, some portrait or model of him was taken, at least among his friends: and if so, the general cast of his features and person might have been conveyed down to the age of Constantine, not quite three hundred years after. It may be legend, or as an argument for image-worship it may be suspected, but as we find it, so we shall give it to the reader. Gregory the second, patriarch of Constantinople, in his epistle to Leo Isaurus the head of the Iconoclasts, speaks of the first Christians as having often painted our Saviour, and other martyrs to his religion. His words are these. “ Qui
 “ dominum, cum viderent, venientes Hierosolymam, spectan-
 “ dum ipsum proponentes, depinxerent, prout viderant. Cum
 “ Stephanum protomartyrum vidissent, spectandum ipsum pro-
 “ ponentes, prout viderant, depinxerunt. Et uno verbo dicam,
 “ cum facies martyrum, qui sanguinem pro Christo fuderunt,
 “ vidissent, depinxerunt” But perhaps what Eusebius* of Cæsarea relates from his own eye-sight may have more weight; and if that be true, there is foundation enough to conclude that Constantine had very good traits of resemblance to go by in his images and pictures of Jesus Christ. What Eusebius says is this; that the woman, who is mentioned by St. Luke† to have been healed of her issue of blood by touching the hem of our Saviour’s garment, as an acknowledgment of her piety and gratitude, as well as a testimony of his miraculous powers, erected in the city of Cæsarea a statue of Jesus Christ in brass, and at his feet was the figure of this woman in a suppliant posture touching the hem of his garment. If any attention was paid in

* Lib. 6. 7. c. 14.

† Cap. 8. ver. 43—48.

that work to the likeness of Christ, which we must suppose the grateful feelings of this woman would be anxious to obtain, more especially as she is said not to have wanted fortune for that purpose, there was certainly ability enough in the age of Tiberius to execute it highly in a Roman province, by Greek artists at least, who were very common through the empire, if not by Romans. That such a statue was erected is confirmed by Antipater Bostrensis, by Nicephorus, Cassiodorus, and Metaphrastus. And that it long abode in its place we have the authority of Sozomen, who says that it was standing in the time of Julian the apostate, who took it away, and ordered his own statue to be set up in its stead.

Many strong things are related by historians of what befel the attempts of that apostate to subvert the evidences which tended to strengthen the character of the great founder of our religion. We shall add to those other relations the very extraordinary circumstances which are reported concerning that statue in Cæsarea, leaving the reader to investigate their credibility for himself, although they are averred by the writers abovequoted as facts, of which in one part or another they declare themselves to have been eye-witnesses. They tell us, that no sooner was Julian's statue fixed up, but it was consumed to ashes by lightning; and that before the original one was removed, a plant grew up at the foot of it, which healed diseases, when once it had grown so high as to touch our Saviour's image.

This was probably a useful argument at the time when it was urged: we seek no further use from it than as it serves to give

a picture of those ages; although the principal fact may nevertheless be admitted, that such a statue was put up.

It was not long after the portraits and images of Jesus Christ, his apostles, and martyrs began to engage the studies of artists, when the Virgin Mary was brought forward into a share of those studies. Among those who were early devoted to the painting of Madonas, was an artist named Luke, who was passionately employed in that way at Constantinople, and acquired a very high reputation. He was a man of exemplary life, and on account of his piety and the edifying use he made of his talents he was generally known by the name of St. Luke. In process of time, when the epoch and circumstances of his life were forgotten by the vulgar, and his performances had acquired by age a smoky, dusky cast, sufficient to perplex the short-sighted connoisseurs of those days, devotees ascribed his pictures to Luke the Evangelist, who was pronounced to have been a painter, because they knew of no other of that name, and because if he had been a painter, no one could have had such opportunities of delineating the features of that holy model. From this mistake it arose, that the colossal portrait of the Virgin Mary, once venerated at Antioch, and now equally venerated in the monastery of William of Vercelli in the Neapolitan dominions, to which monastery it was presented by Catharine wife of Philip of Anjou, titular emperor of Constantinople, has always passed, and to this moment passes in that country, for the work of Luke the Evangelist drawn from the life. And thus it has happened that some dozens of black and ugly Madonas, which are to be met with in Italy and elsewhere, are revered as the works of

that Evangelist*. Those paintings, however, and especially that in the Neapolitan monastery, which very probably came from holy Luke of Constantinople, may be considered as a reasonable criterion of what the pencil could do in those days, so far as relates to the head; for the bust was added by Montano d'Arrezzo a celebrated modern artist, to whom Philip of Anjou gave land near Nola as a recompence.

The zeal for Christianity, with which Constantine was impressed, availed itself of those great characters from which that religion flowed. With those he adorned his palaces, his public edifices, and churches, which were no longer filled with those warriors of the earth, who had filled every situation where fame was brought forward to the public eye. Their places were supplied by those spiritual champions, who fought to establish glory to God, with no other arms than their own pure eloquence, and backed by no other visible support than their own patience and constancy in the delivery of that eloquence.

In the churches indeed the precedent became unhappy only from its abuse. What the artist had finished as an object of contemplative pleasure, or of admiration at most, became in process of time converted into an object of worship. If this contributed for a while to keep the arts in demand, it certainly contributed to sink them as instrumental to the perversion of truth and good sense. Was not the judicious respect for the holy character lost in senseless extravagance, was not religion

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 1. p. 189. 190.

corrupted indeed, when the image went halves at least with the Almighty in the service that was offered?

But it is the fate of every thing excellent to be more or less abused. The patronage given by Constantine to the fine arts could no way be responsible for those consequences, to which they were made instrumental by folly and superstition. It is matter of just applause that he gave a new and vigorous spur to those arts, in whose improvements the human mind finds itself improved. And that spur was such as not only formed a new epoch in the arts, but in it's general circumstances and effects may be reasoned upon in the same manner with other epochs, greater and more illustrious than itself. It seems to be the peculiar constitution of the fine arts easily to feel depression from any circumstances which darken society, and yet readily to revive with every returning encouragement which throws light, and comfort, and security around. The vices, the confusions, the broils and miseries of later Rome had almost driven them, with genius in general, from the face of society. Having nothing but the dregs of Rome to feed on, their nicer spirit revolted from the situation, and left only their own dregs to those who seemed capable of no better taste. It is their nature, or it is their fate. They cannot live and thrive in the tumultuousness of human affairs. They become the first sacrifice to great and prevailing disorders; a voluntary sacrifice; they yield up their heads to the first overthrow of tranquility and order. Like some sensitive natures in the vegetable world, if you approach them rudely, they draw back; but if you touch them harshly, they shrink and disappear. Yet let darkness and danger be gone, let quiet and prosperity revive, let these bring in their

train an animated patronage, and the arts will appear again; the kindly spark of genius, as if it were indispensable to the existence of regular society, is presently rekindled, where its elements have not been totally smothered, and will illumine again the sphere which by its absence was left in barbarism. Thus it was, in both those aspects, when Greece knew nothing but disturbance and dismay for two hundred and seventy years after the fifteenth olympiad, and when she became happy and secure with the retreat of Xerxes. We mean not to speak of the advantages given to the arts in Constantinople as similar to their former recovery in Greece: but undoubtedly they rose greatly to the encouragements of that new epoch; and that epoch effected at least this service to the arts, that it became the means of preserving among the Greeks, in subsequent ages of darkness, those seeds from which the western world once more was enabled to raise the stores that have enriched the moderns.

Had those encouragements been followed up by the immediate successors of Constantine, there is no saying to what growth the arts might not have risen in the eastern empire. But the new life, which they had obtained from him, was not destined to be uninterrupted. The mind of Constantius was given to another pursuit: it was devoted to the fomenting of religious disputes, chiefly upon words; and his treasury was exhausted by sending bishops round the world to hold councils for prescribing modes of worship and rules of belief. There was no room therefore in his mind for the contemplation of elegant arts. If we except the admiration which he expressed for some remains of those arts at Rome, and which seems to have been rather a casual and uninterested curiosity than any portion of elegant

feeling, there does not appear a single instance in which he bestowed a thought upon their culture. The removal of an Egyptian obelisk to Rome, which had been partly brought on its way from Hieropolis to Alexandria, was a mere vanity*. Indeed he kept his chief residence at Milan, neglecting equally both the capitals of his empire.

The accession of the first Theodosius gave the return of better days to the arts, although near forty years had elapsed from the death of Constantine before those days were seen. We hardly know, or hardly think it worth while to enquire, what might have been the exercise of sculpture in that period. It is sufficient to know that it could not have gained much, if any thing, from the languor shewn to it by such princes as filled that interval; and we may be pretty certain that it lost nothing, when we advert to the pillar of Theodosius, of which there is happily a design now preserved in the Royal Academy of painting and sculpture at Paris. On that pillar, which evidently shews the emulation of Theodosius to leave a monument of his attention to the arts as well as to his own military glory, he recorded in bas-reliefs the history of his exploits against the Scythians and other barbarous nations, and the trophies of his victories, in imitation of what had been done by Trajan on his column at Rome; choosing, as Trajan had done, according to Chambray's account of it, the Tuscan order† for that structure. And that pillar may be taken as a full criterion of the state to which sculpture was brought in the East by Constantine and Theodo-

* Ammian. lib. 17. p. 92. Baron. anno 357.

† Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 7. The base and capital were finished after the Tuscan manner.

sius. Monier, a former professor of painting in the French academy, speaking of that pillar, says, that in it's bas-reliefs is displayed much of the ancient spirit of sculpture*: to which we shall add, as a farther proof of it's authenticity, that along with it's emulation of that ancient spirit the defects of it's own age were neither lost nor hidden. The profound artist will see in it a manifest attempt to reach the antique stile, but in that attempt a manifest failure of success.

It was not however to that pillar of Theodosius that the best emulations of his sculpture were confined. A tetrasceles or quadrilateral pyramid, constructed to shew from what point the wind blew, was a monument not least famous among those works to which his elegant spirit had given birth†. That curious and noble structure, supported by several ranges of pillars, and overlooking by it's elevation the whole city, was the admiration of beholders, and the wonder of that age. We know not that such an edifice had been raised since the famous, but more perfect, octagonal tower of the winds built by Andronicus Cyrrhestes at Athens, for the accurate knowledge of which we are indebted to the labours and the science of the late Mr. Stuart‡. From that Athenian tower we have no doubt that Theodosius took the thought of his pyramid. It was a noble effort to emulate a design, which if not as a structure, yet as a thought, was certainly of all the great works which dignified Greece that which distinguishedly shewed the high conceptions of her people, their study of the grand and sublime, and their determination that every thing which called for their skill,

* Monier's Hist. of Paint. p. 59.

† Petr. Gyll. lib. 3. c. 6. Nicetas Choniata. MSS. Cod. Bodl. fol. 447. l. 25.

‡ See his Athens, V. 1. c. 3.

even in common use, should be replete with taste, and replete with philosophy. It would have served any other people, as it has served all modern times, to have looked at a van or weather-cock on the top of any building, in order to find the point of the wind. But the Athenians could not be content, unless they sought that object in all the dignity which philosophically belonged to it's theory, and with all the elevated taste which had been given to it by poetic imagination. Thus a common experiment became in their hands a work of elegance, and an elegant instruction to every observer.

Theodosius wished to dignify his age with a similar work of skill, although his age will hardly be expected to reach the talents displayed in the compleatness of structure, or in the profound selection of dress given to it, by Andronicus Cyrrhestes. It fell short of the latter as a structure, by as much as a quadrilateral building must fall short of an octagon in the capacity of shewing in it's several parts an equal variety of points from whence the wind may blow. But the emulation, to which we would principally advert in that work of Theodosius, is in it's sculptures. In the tower at Athens those sculptures were all perfectly characteristic of the subject, and for the most part closely expressive of those effects which the winds in their various quarters were known to produce in that region. The age of Theodosius was not so nicely and chastely critical, it was not so profoundly studious and learned in it's emblematical theories: and therefore as the anemodes on his pyramid, being the figure of a woman turning with her wand to the point of the wind, was far more humble and less figurative than the triton on the Athenian tower, so the former was filled with figures and scenes, and productions of the earth and

feas*, which would naturally enough have befitted rural sports, but had nothing to do with the sports or actions of elements. We shall forbear then to speak of those sculptures as possessing emblematical merit; it will be sufficient, and as much as seems to have entered into the plan of Theodosius, if they had the merit of execution. We are not at liberty to doubt that they had equal merit with the sculptures and bas-reliefs on the pillar of that emperor. Those who have described them have spoken of them as exhibiting much of the ancient spirit, doubtless with some manifestations of the inferiority which that age could not surmount. They demonstrate, nevertheless, the spirit of that patronage, which had so happily followed, before it was too late, the culture so abundantly afforded by Constantine.

If the immense expence bestowed upon sculpture in that period might be received as an evidence of the pains that were taken with it, such evidence may be had in abundance. For statues in silver of great magnitude were no rare exhibition. They must have been of magnitude, when they were placed on lofty columns. That of Theodosius on his own pillar weighed seven thousand four hundred pounds†. Another of the empress Eudoxia, wife of his son Arcadius, on a pillar of porphyry, and which became the unhappy cause of banishing St. Chrysostom, was also very considerable in its size‡. If by that expence they thought to perpetuate their sculptures, they were mistaken. What else could happen to such statues but that which did happen? If an earthquake did not overthrow them, they were sure

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 3. c. 6. Nicetas Choniates. ubi sup.

† Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 17. Pancirolus on Notitia utr. imp. 7th ward.

‡ Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 9.

in no very distant period to be leveled and melted by the hand of man, regardless of their perfections, and yet perhaps encouraging the progress of the same art in less valuable materials. Thus did Justinian serve that statue of Theodosius, substituting in its place, or on another pillar in the same spot, an equestrian statue of himself in bronze *.

The character of Theodosius as attached to the fine arts will suffer nothing by his decree, which leveled in destruction all the statues and sculptures in the temples of Egypt, with those temples themselves. That decree must be placed to the account of paganism, the suppression of which, and of the tumults arising from it in Egypt, he considered as a duty, at the same time that he did not look upon the sculptures of that country as worthy to soften his decree. We take a very different view of him, acting under the same impression at Rome; where he used every method to abolish the pagan religion, but without destroying the fine statues of its gods, which he converted into ornaments to the squares and conspicuous parts of the city†.

Sculpture certainly suffered in the loss of Theodosius, although it did not lose at once what it had been gaining from that emperor. Arcadius, his son and successor, was a weak prince, with little of the father in his constitution to call forth and maintain what was great in the human mind and in human talents. And yet he gave the arts of his reign much exercise, particularly in bronze, and sometimes in silver, statues of a colossal kind. But it is not the casting or chiseling of hundreds of statues, which

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 17.

† Prud. in Sym. lib. 1. p. 220.

will keep up that art in vigour, if it's genius be not nourished in original exertions, and if the study of design be not regularly reared along with the ordinary encouragements of art. Arcadius had his column as well as his father; but in that column appeared the imbecillity of embracing a copy instead of forming an original design, for it neither advanced nor varied in any part of it's structure from that of Theodosius, as Cedrenus assures us; and with respect to it's sculptures, especially the bas-reliefs which presented the scenes of war, Petrus Gyllius, who surveyed it minutely, and has accurately described it throughout, tells us that they were a strong imitation of those which adorn the Trajan column at Rome*.

It did not look much like a growing nourishment of living genius in that period, when collections of antique works began to be made in Constantinople, which was full of antiquities brought from every part of the empire; although we allow that the gratification of private taste may prompt the desire of possessing those works of ancient skill, where the fine arts are neither in their infancy, nor under any great imperfections, at home. Of those who thus gleaned, after all that the emperors had reaped from the world at large, a citizen named Lausus was most conspicuous, and successful too, when he acquired, amidst a multitude of other sculptures, the celebrated statue of Venus of Cnidos in white marble by Praxiteles—a Juno of Samos by Lyfippus and Bupalus, which was brought from Myndus—a Jupiter riding on an elephant, the work of Phidias, and placed in the temple of that god by Pericles—and older still than all those, and more

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 7.

remarkable in it's history, the statue of Minerva of Lindia wrought by Scyllis and Dipænus out of an emerald four cubits long and three broad, presented by the king of Babylon to Sesostris king of Egypt, and by him given to Cleobulus king of Lindia*.

There were indeed considerable sculptures on the twelve tables enclosed at the sides of the gate of the seven towers, six tables on each side. These are spoken of by Petrus Gyllius, who has minutely described them, in the highest terms of applause for their antiquity and admirable workmanship; but he has unfortunately omitted to inform us of the æra in which they were produced, unless he meant that we should understand them as put up at the same time with the erection of the church and monastery of Studius, of which he is there speaking†; that is, in the reign of Leo the great, about fifty years after Arcadius‡. In any such period it is impossible that any such sculptures could have been produced; nor perhaps in that of Arcadius, the immediate successor of Theodosius, unless we make some abatements, as we have already intimated, from the unqualified applauses of the pens which have handed them down to our knowledge. If those pens are right in their strictures, those sculptures must have been the works of higher antiquity, brought there when that gate was erected, if not before.

There is little to be traced in the spirit of sculpture through

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 25.

† Ibid. lib. 4. c. 9.

‡ Nicephorus Eccl. Hist. lib. 15. c. 25. Pancirolus on Notitia utr. Imp. ad finem.

the next hundred and fifty years, till we come to the reign of Justinian ; although there was not an emperor in all that length of time, who did not add to the statues of the city. Theodosius II. thought, indeed, that the best addition he could make was by bringing from the temple of Mars at Athens those statues of elephants, which were placed upon the porta aurea*. So long a period, replete with so many adverse circumstances, was enough to sink the arts in irrecoverable depression. What else could be expected, where the throne was filled by characters generally weak, and sometimes quite illiterate? where the frequent changes in it's succession, brought about by usurpation and intestine divisions more often than by natural death, made every thing uncertain? where the empire was continually harried by hostile invasions of Persians, Bulgarians, Goths, and Saracens? and where the tumults arising from thence were made more furious and fatal by the severities of the government? In scenes like those the only surprize must have been, that when Justinian came to the throne there was such a thing as a fine art to be found in his dominions.

And yet we meet with no reign, in which the sculptor appears to have been more employed than in that of Justinian, or in which the applause of cotemporary writers has been more lavish than on the works of that period. If the language of those panegyrists were to decide us, we should be apt to imagine that in no period from the foundation of Constantinople, or rather from the foundation of the world, the fine arts had risen to higher celebrity than in the interval between Theodosius the

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 8. Procop. on Notitia utr. Imp. 12th ward.

great and Justinian. An inscription, quoted by Cedrenus, on the celebrated *chalca* or vestibule of the Imperial palace, as it was rebuilt by Anastasius, who died about ten years before the accession of Justinian, takes a tone of eulogy on the architect, the structure, and the works of art contained in it, which beggars ordinary panegyric, and leaves the artists of all other ages as pigmies compared with those of its own. A few lines will shew the spirit of that inscription.

“ Not Italy with all its glory shews
 “ A structure so magnificent and great :
 “ Not the proud capitol of ancient Rome,
 “ With all its gilded roofs, can rival me.
 “ Not the fam’d temple, which at Cyzico
 “ By Adrian built stands on a lofty rock,
 “ Nor Egypt’s costly pyramids, nor at Rhodes
 “ The mighty coloss, equal me in greatness.
 “ The costly galleries of Pergamus,
 “ Ruffinus walks, and stately porticos,
 “ Crouded with art and marble images,
 “ Submit to my superior workmanship*.

Procopius the secretary of Justinian, and of course his panegyrist, was not much behind the extravagance of that inscription, when he says, that the sculptures adorning the court which was built by that emperor near the baths of Arcadius, were “ so lovely and finished to such perfection, that the spectator would have taken them for the works of Phidias, Lysippus, or Praxiteles ; and that the statue of the empress Theodora in parti-

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 18.

“ cular was possessed of the most inexpressible and inconceivable
 “ gracefulness and dignity of style”*.

Those terms of expression were prompted by extreme partiality, beyond what sober judgment could have pronounced. Petrus Gyllius, living at a greater distance of time, was not under the same impression, and therefore he is more modest in his language, although not wanting in commendation: he speaks of “ a noble piece of sculpture” by Zoophorus, an artist of that age, in the church of the two illustrious martyrs Sergius and Bacchus, erected by Justinian†.

Let this pass as a proof that Justinian had found powers in sculpture. We make no question that every thing which painting could do was also tried, although we have no proofs of it remaining or recorded. But we have a striking proof of Mosaic, the undoubted work of that age, on the roof of the celebrated chancel or vestibule, if from thence we may judge how the pencil would have designed and executed its general subjects. A greater subject indeed is not found on record in that species of art. We have already hinted at the objects embraced by it, and the curious reader will find the whole set forth in Procopius, and after him in Petrus Gyllius‡. It shewed that the mind of art then dared a great attempt, however competent it might be to fill it. That of which we are speaking required no inconsiderable capacities in its way, and among others the capacity of design.

* Procop. 1st Orat. de ædifi. Justiniani.

† Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 14.

‡ Ibid. lib. 2. c. 18.

How shall we account for these things, combined with all the circumstances which had long surrounded the arts? The character of Justinian must solve them. His character was great: and of that greatness every thing around him participated. The enterprize, which filled his breast, he could convey into the breasts of others, and into every species of talent. Whether he was himself possessed of taste or not, he knew that taste was a national greatness, and a very successful means of perpetuating fame to individuals and to a country. His policy therefore, if not his fondness for the arts, nor his critical knowledge of their powers, would be effectual along with the weight of his character not only to arrest a falling taste, and to baffle the resistance of general circumstances, but to draw out every latent power to it's best strength, to quicken the sluggish, to rouse the disheartened, and to make more of the means that were left for him than they might ordinarily be thought capable of producing. Certain it is, that with him the majesty of the empire revived in all it's general circumstances. But it is equally true, that after him there was not strength sufficient to maintain it, and therefore with him it fell*; with him fell every thing that was great, never more to rear up it's head in that empire. He may be considered as the last Roman emperor, when we speak either of talents or prosperity. All that followed him were merely instruments to carry on that gradual declension, for which the empire was reserved.

How great the declension of sculpture was in the space of about fifty years after Justinian, we have an existing evidence in the

* A. D. 566.

Arrachio, or statue of the emperor Heraclius, a colossal bronze of seventeen feet three inches height, in the market-place of Barletta in the Two Sicilies*. We consider the general tradition of that statue, confirmed by some historians, as sufficiently deciding it to represent that emperor. And there must have been left in the empire very little of that workmanship, which was so highly extolled by Procopius and the inscription, when the statue of a reigning monarch, which would doubtless be sought from one of the first hands, was sent forth with a design so rude and incorrect, and an attitude so awkward, as that which is visible in the figure we have now mentioned. It would make some difference indeed in this conclusion, if it could be made to appear that the statue at Barletta was cast in Italy, and not in the East; because, although Rome had her emperor as well as Constantinople, yet the former certainly languished more than the latter, especially after she had been supplanted by Ravenna in the Imperial residence, and in the advantages derived from thence, which first took place in the reign of Honorius. If therefore that statue were a Roman work, the defects conspicuous in it might be accounted for from the locality of its origin, without being any direct proof of the declensions of sculpture in the East. And yet, even then, that declension will return upon us, when we recollect that all the best artists employed in Italy at that time, and for some time before, and for a long time afterwards, were Greeks from the eastern empire. The only ground of suspicion that it might have been cast in Italy is the short cloak thrown over the left arm; which is nevertheless repelled by the express accounts of some historians†, who say that

* Swinb. Vol. i. p. 272.

† Swinb. ubi sup.

this statue with other valuable presents was sent by Heraclius from Constantinople, and that the ship which conveyed them was cast away on the Puglian coast, and the statue thrown on the sands. There undoubtedly it had lain many ages half-buried, till in A. D. 1491 it was dug up, and placed where now it stands.

Independently however of what concerns that statue, it is remarkable that with the reign of Heraclius we cease to read of any new works in sculpture at Constantinople. The historians of later date, and particularly Petrus Gyllius, by whom we are carried minutely through all the productions of art which adorned that capital, have not dropped the least hint of any sculptures in a subsequent period. That some might have appeared, and might have survived at least in tradition, if not in record, the wrecks that afterwards ensued, had they been worthy either of tradition or record, is no less probable than that more ancient works, known only by tradition to those who wrote at a great distance of time, have been handed down to our knowledge. The circumstances of the times will sufficiently explain both the great humility and rarity of sculpture after the period of Heraclius. Even in his reign we find little mention of that art as then exercised, hardly any thing more than his Exammon in the Basilica*. His successor and grandson Constantius II. seems to have considered sculpture as out of his reach, unless when he made more havoc at Rome in a few days, out of the gleanings which were left for him there, than barbarians had done in more than two centuries†. For near fifty years afterwards scarcely a man ascended

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 19.

† Ibid. lib. 2. c. 18. Vafari, Proem. p. 71.

the Imperial throne in the East without experiencing a speedy deposition; and, after that, the throne became filled with the spirit of the Iconomachists in the second Leo, who acceded in A. D. 716, and whose spirit gradually encreasing with the successions of his posterity persecuted sculpture without intermission for an hundred and twenty years. The land must have been greatly thinned of statuaries in the early stages of that persecution by what befel one Andreas, who was whipped to death in the Hippodrom by the order of that Leo, or of Constantine his successor, because he was a statuary and of some greater note than others*. It may therefore be set down beyond dispute, that after the days of Justinian sculpture never saw the state which it enjoyed, however mixed with defects, under that emperor.

In the mean time we are to consider the pencil as never laid down, although it has not afforded us the same scope of observation which sculpture has done. In all the periods through which we have passed, it's efforts were occasionally seen, but generally in portraits. In one period an Achatius, a vain and haughty bishop of Constantinople, filled the churches with his own portraits, not caring to trust those who should come after him for the remembrance of him in that way†. He was justly named, by way of reproach, Doxomanes. In another period the portrait of a minister put up in the palace of Placidia was followed by a copy of verses composed by the learned Agathius‡. It must not surprize us, if when sculpture was become persecuted, it's sister-art, less open to the objections of that per-

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 4. c. 6.

† Ibid. lib. 3. c. 9.

‡ Ibid.

secution, or to the habits which raised them, should strive to rear up it's head in new attempts which were not likely to incur the vengeance of Iconoclasts. Subjects of religion were daring to it's efforts, but they could not offend. In those times there was every thing in their favour to help the infirmities of the pencil, and to give effects which the pencil itself might despair of producing. Those subjects too were rather novel to those ages, and consequently must strike with a greater impresson; while the want of acquaintance with excellent paintings of those days would secure that impresson from being diminished by any defects in the works that were then done. But ignorance was probably as useful then to keep the pencil alive, as true taste had ever been. And if ignorance alone should fail of producing that effect, it might be counted as securely obtained from the awe of religion, which would be accumulated to minds that had not been taught to meet it's influence in a genial and enlightening comfort, but in the contractedness of bigotry, in the darkness which had never afforded right principles, in the gloom of severe ideas, and in the fearfulness natural to those who know nothing of the path in which they tread. To such the lessons of religion, although truly revealed, were benighting severities, and all it's energies were terrors. Yet they were severities and terrors, to which those ages had no objection, and on which they would hang with a peculiar warmth of respect, devoted to religion almost beyond every thing else.

Assisted by those circumstances of the times, when the pencil adventured on religious subjects, it derived to it's own imbecility an effect beyond what might have been conceived in all it's strength. The fact is, it produced effects which really open a

new scene in its history, and would almost lead us to imagine that the arts of those ages had been misconceived, when they have been considered as rude and dark. Whatever were the imperfections of their paintings, if all that we read concerning them is not absolute fable, they often produced effects which were never exceeded by perfection itself. Gregory of Nice an ancient father of the eastern church, in an oration made by him at Constantinople, tells his audience of tears which he never failed to shed over a picture representing Abraham about to sacrifice his son. On another occasion he describes the picture of a martyrdom so forcibly drawn, that ocular demonstration of the real scene could not more pungently affect the feelings: there was no bearing to look on it*.

But what were these effects, compared with those which were produced in the eighth century by Methodius a monk? for we must look for the arts, as well as for what literature then existed, in the cells of monks. Bogoris king of Bulgaria employed Methodius to paint a palace he had built, with a general order that he should draw scenes of a severer cast; that monarch taking particular pleasure in pictures which represented the combats of hunters with boars, lions, bears, and tigers. The monk, conceiving that nothing could be more severe or terrible than the day of judgment, and perhaps wishing to try its influence in the conversion of the monarch from paganism, painted it as horrible and affecting as his genius could inspire him, placing the damned on the left hand of the judge, delivered over to be dragged by devils into hell. The picture succeeded to the ut-

* Greg. of Nice Oration of St. Theodore. Second Nicene Council, ac. 4.

most wish of the holy artist. For so powerfully affected was the monarch, that without waiting for other evidence he became converted to Christianity—and all his people after him*.

Let the writers of that age be answerable for those facts. They are by no means impossible to have happened in such an age. And some of those writers, particularly Cedrenus, have generally been looked upon as not destitute of respect. We record what we find respectably delivered. A small circumstance may nevertheless make a considerable variation in the history of the fact, while the credit of the historian may be unimpeached, if he shall have taken a commonly supposed cause for a real one, or shall have stated as simple the cause which in truth might be mixed. That Bogoris was converted to Christianity, and that his example, as might be expected in a prince, drew after it many of his people, is an event that was followed by very serious disputes, which laid the seeds of an everlasting schism between the pope and the patriarch of Constantinople, to whose jurisdiction of the two the Christian Bulgaria should belong. But perhaps his conversion, first opened by that picture, might be completed by his wife, who was a Christian before. If she wanted assistance in her purpose, and especially if she wished to shade in any degree her own influence, it is not improbable that seeing before her in that picture the moment arrived for carrying those points, she availed herself of it's aid. In those ages, if not in all others, queens were remarkably at the source of influence: they were, in fact, apostles in courts: they changed the religion of their royal consorts in more instances than that of Bogoris, and often

* Cedrenus, p. 540. 541. Par. edit. Zonaras, related by M. H. D. Iconocl.

without disguise. Autharic, the third king of the Lombards in Italy, was well known to be converted to Christianity by the influence of his wife Theodolinda, a princess of Bavaria. It was but indeed a half conversion that she effected, because like most of the barbarians he embraced the Arian sect, while she was a catholic. The Lombards, however, in that case, according to general custom, followed their prince in his new religion, and in his special tenets of it too. Autharic died; and Agilulf succeeded not only to his throne, but to his bed. Theodolinda left no means untried to make him a catholic, which at last she effected—and the people became catholics*.

This short digression shall not carry us from our point. If any other causes, made more probable from what has happened in similar instances, concurred with the painting of Methodius in the conversion of Bogoris, there is no reason to say that the picture had no share in that event. And yet it will not follow, that the art had any perfections of which it might boast. The subjects themselves, and the source from which they were drawn, went a great way to cover all that was deficient in the painting, and to give it a success beyond what could have been gained by the finest execution of similar subjects not drawn from the same source. This will appear in a very pointed comparison afforded by history. Nicias the Athenian painted the hell of the poets†, and poets were the dispensers of the popular creed, but without reforming any one bad man that we know of, without adding any signal advantages to the cause of virtue or religion. It

* See Millot's *Mod. Hist.* Vol. 1. p. 79. 205.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 11. *Felb.* V. 1. p. 72.

rouzed indeed the feelings of a king*—only to offer in vain sixty talents for its purchase. When the pencil of a monk, clogged with all the imperfections of a dark and rude age, brings forward the day of judgment, that subject becomes equal to the mission of an apostle, whether it was singly productive of the effects ascribed to it, or in concurrence with any other cause.

If the lapse of ages, acting on the more perishable nature of paintings, has deprived us of the best evidence of their merit in those distant times, the event has not been quite the same with respect to the more durable nature of Mosaic in the same ages. That species of painting, as it is called, had for many centuries rivaled every other, and had become a fixed and prevailing branch of art in the Eastern empire; so fixed and in such repute that it was taken up and imitated by the Saracens in pavements, the only way in which they would be concerned with painting. A rude specimen of such a pavement, not unlike that of our Edward the First in Westminster Abbey, may be seen in the cathedral of Otranto in the Neapolitan territories, and in most of the churches afterwards founded by the Norman kings of Sicily†. MosaiCs had seen their best days in the reign of Justinian, after which their rivalry of other arts was destined to sink with the rest. By the time that the eighth century was come, they were miserably fallen from their past pretensions. Early in the ninth century, that is, in A. D. 828, the specimen which was given in that way by the Greeks, who were employed at Venice

* Ptolemy king of Egypt, according to Plutarch; Attalus king of Pergamus, according to Pliny.

† Swinb. V. 2. p. 280.

in the choir of our Saviour's chapel*, was poor indeed, and exceedingly inferior to what had been produced at Constantinople but a century before. Nor were those specimens more advanced in merit, which were afterwards wrought in the same city by Greeks, who were sent for in the year 973 to rebuild and decorate the church of St. Mark, as it is seen at this day†.

Yet Mosaics still went on with all their imperfections in the hands of Greeks, some of whom were called about the year 1013 to work in Mosaic in the choir of St. Miniato's church at Florence‡. That was the spot for them to visit; the spot, on which no seeds of elegant genius were ever cast in vain; the spot, which being of old impregnated with the fire of art was sure to quicken, sooner or later, every spark of ingenious talent that was committed to its warmth. That visit of those humble Greeks was not lost to the interest of the arts, although the period was a long one, inevitably long in those ages, before the notice which their Mosaics awakened in the minds of the Florentines rose to any crisis. But that crisis came at last, and from those very Mosaics, poor as they were. In the space of two hundred years more, that is, in the thirteenth century, Venice made a third call on the Greek painters in Mosaic to add other works of that kind in the same church of St. Mark. This revived the attention of the Florentines, who drew to their city some of those artists from Venice to paint in their manner the chapel of Gondi§. Those artists were followed by others, and became the instruments, along with other concurring circumstances, of giving a revival to all the fine arts in general.

* *Rioſti delle maraviglie dell' arte*, p. 12.

‡ *Ibid.* Proem. 73. 75.

† *Vafari*, Proem. p. 72. 75.

§ *Ibid.* V. i. p. 25. 26.

But our business at present is with those arts in their decline. They have been now deduced to a period, beyond which it would be of no use to inquire after any character they might possess. It is proper, however, to mark more particularly the causes to which their final desolation was owing.

For a long time before the period in which we last spoke of painting, events were hastening in all the parts of the empire, which left not the emperors to consider whether the arts of elegance should any longer be cultivated in their dominions, but whether their dominions, as well as those arts, should any longer exist. The desolations, which soon after the time of Theodosius began to overspread Rome and all her dependencies in the western division, and which were continued with increasing severity for an hundred and fifty years, left that part of the empire an heap of ruins, and made it sufficiently embarrassing to the emperors how to stop the danger from reaching them in the other, how to suspend the strides of revolution which were moving rapidly towards them. If a house divided against itself cannot stand, so neither can it be strong, if it be divided; at least, it is weaker than it was before, and to eyes more dangerous than its own, the eyes of strangers. Accordingly strangers began to follow the ambition which those observations fed. The time was come for the East to take her share in the calamities which had desolated the West. The sect of Mahomet arose. They overran all the eastern provinces. With them it was a first principle to abominate every thing which presented itself as an image of any living creature. They spared therefore no work of painting or sculpture, on which they could lay their hands. They threw

down every work of design, they hardly left one stone upon another that had formed any building of magnificence.

Yet were those but the beginnings of sorrow to the arts. The capital, and its treasures of taste, were yet safe. But another century had not revolved, when these found, as well as every other part of the empire, more inveterate destroyers in their own emperors than had ever been seen in strangers. The arts might truly say, that "their greatest foes were they of their own household". It was reserved for their own princes to finish their extirpation. The Iconoclasts came forward, breathing as it were but one sentiment, and glorying but in one purpose, the destruction of images. They reached the feat of empire, which was filled by Leo Isaurus or Iconomachus at their head *.

If it be urged that great abuses of the arts had taken place, and that the worship of images was among the causes which led to their destruction, the answer is just and true, that no such cause gave the first rise to Iconoclasm, but a desire to gratify the Jews by Leo Isaurus, because two of them had predicted that he from an obscure birth should ascend to the empire, which accordingly happened. We cannot therefore speak of that destruction of images as pure in its principle. If it had been dictated by an opposition to image-worship, why were all the religious paintings in the churches defaced by that Leo? Why were all the Mosaics in the church of the Virgin Mary, and in the palace of the empress Pulcheria, which that Leo himself had spared, torn

* A. D. 726.

down by his son Constantine Copronymus? If any principle of religion had been there, why were the places of those Mosaics supplied by fresco-paintings of landscapes and birds? And why did Nicetas, the false patriarch, to please that Constantine, desolate not only all the Mosaics, but a fine sheet of bas-reliefs on general subjects, in his hall of audience?

Those destructions therefore were at least mixed with motives more fit for a dark age than for one enlightened by true religion; and they were certainly execrable in the extent to which their measures were often carried. Let the wretched Leo Isaurus have stripped every church and every private house of every work of painting and sculpture which they contained; let him have gathered these into that horrid pile, which rose up in flames in the great square of the city—if any one principle of true religion had been at the bottom of his breast. But why did he wreak his vengeance on general learning? Why did he devote to the flames that excellent college the Prytaneum, founded and endowed by Constantine for the instruction of general science, and not only that college itself, but the master and its professors and students*. Desolations like those make us look aghast on the desperate viciousness, to which the human mind is sometimes capable of being brought. Yet it is more tremendous to reflect, that many generations followed that man in his temper and in the exercise of his power. Is there in human nature a current of blood so deep in its dye, so rank in its virulence, that no mixture with others, nor progress of time, can mellow its aspect, or work out its venom? Dreadful as those mischiefs were,

* Cedren. p. 454. Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 20. Pancirol. on Notit. utr. Imp. 5th. ward.

they continued, with only two short respites from more moderate minds, for nine generations in succession; till there was hardly left an important work of art in the empire.

It was well for Leo a bishop, and a celebrated man in those days, that his taste for ingenuity did not consign him to the wreck, in which so many characters and works of genius had perished before him. We must suppose that the elegant art he cultivated had the better fortune to please the age; and that the figures he formed ensured their success by the amusement which they afforded. We must conclude too, that the good man saw little probability of succeeding in his episcopal function, amidst the senseless and irreligious rage of those times, when he strove so much, and at a great expence, to distinguish himself by an employment, in which certainly no bishop did ever shine so well before or since. He is said to have attracted the admiration of the age by certain trees made of solid gold, among the boughs of which were dispersed several golden birds, which by the help of an engine sang melodiously; while the spectators were equally surprized by the roaring of a golden lion effected by the same artifice*.

Theophilus closed the execrable list of those murderers of genius, and at the same time closed all the measures which a rancour against the arts could devise, by his ordinance forbidding the exercise of painting and sculpture throughout his dominions. When the Abramite Monks remonstrated to him on that measure, they were carried out of the city, and whipped to

* Cedrenus. Curopal. Zonaras in Mich.

death, and their bodies were left unburied on the ground, till the piety of their friends after some time provided them with a secret interment*. He saw therefore the final destruction of those arts, and of every thing that engaged them, but the hands of Lazarus. Was not that a glorious monk, worthy of the best religion in the world, worthy of that divine Master whom he served, and worthy to be celebrated for ever, when in the face of that tyrant Theophilus, and in defiance of all his threats, he would not desist from painting subjects of religion? Plates of red-hot iron were applied to his hands, to render them incapable of action. He got himself cured as soon as he could: but before he could hold his pencil, he contrived to model an image; and when the use of his hands was completely regained, he then returned to his pencil again. He was therefore both painter and sculptor. To save him then from destruction, female humanity, that precious gift of female nature, interposed. The empress Theodora begged his life, and her request was granted†. Not to injure his benefactress, yet not to lose the satisfactions of his art, and perhaps the utility of it too, as he conceived, he changed his habits from public to private; but he only changed them. He shut himself up in his cell within the church of St. John Baptist; where, with his pencil in his hands he waited patiently for the death of the tyrant who had cruelly treated, but not subdued him. And when it pleased the Almighty to rid the earth and this virtuous man of that scourge of human ingenuity, Lazarus came forth from his privacy with that image of his Divine Master, as it were the first-fruits of his faith, which was set up on the brazen gate of the Imperial palace, in the room of

* Cedrenus, p. 519. Par. ed.

† She died, A. D. 855.

that image of Christ which had been originally placed there by Constantine, and had been thrown down by Leo the Armenian*.

Here must be left in the hands of a few generous monks the fate of painting and sculpture in the ancient world. It is hardly worth while to inquire what was the real condition of either in the period at which we are now arrived, or how that condition became worse in periods still lower. It may give a sufficient idea of that condition, when we observe that it has been distinguished by the appellation of "the old Greek way", as different from "the ancient way of the Greeks" as deformity is from beauty: and that "old Greek way" is synonymous with what Italians mean when they speak of "gothic†". We shall just observe further, that in the space of another century after the age of Lazarus, those old Greek painters came down to simple lines, which they coloured all over equally without any shadowing‡. And for their sculpture, the curious may be satisfied in the Neapolitan territories, which were a branch of the Eastern empire, by the view of a lion placed in the great square of Bari in A. D. 1002. It was set up there by the citizens as a memorial of their gratitude to the republic of Venice and its doge, who came with a fleet, and obliged the Saracens to raise the siege of that city. The sculpture of it is barbarous enough§.

* Cedrenus, p. 520. Par. ed. That first image of Christ underwent many revolutions. It was first broken by Leo Isaurianus, and afterwards made again by Constantine and Irenæa. Then it was taken away by Nicephorus, and set up again by Michael Curopalatus. And, lastly, it was thrown down by Leo the Armenian.

† Vafari, proem. p. 75. Monier, p. 73.

‡ Vafari, proem. p. 74. 75. Monier, p. 84. § Swinb. V. 1. p. 301.

We make no doubt that it was the work of Greek monks. For they, who were then the preservers of the arts, were monks and Greeks. They were Greeks, whether they were settled in the East or in Italy. In Italy as well as in the East they laid the foundation of an honourable memory of themselves, by their endeavours to save both the fine arts and general literature from becoming extinct. Perhaps in Italy the choice of evils was less severe and distressing in the comparative adversities of the two countries: however that were, in the Neapolitan territories, that is, in Magna Græcia those Greeks were at home. In every situation they were industriously disposed to keep up those pursuits of ingenuity as well as of wisdom, which had always marked the character of Greeks. Those Monks, who by country and language were Italians, were more proud of the fame and homage which resulted from their having a place in the calendar and rubric as devotees to monastic purposes, than as cultivators of genius. Hence it came to pass that many an excellent Greek, and some Greek societies settled in that part of the world, overshadowed by the more engrossing pretensions of Italian saints, have sunk almost from the knowledge of posterity, to whom their names have been handed down much less by legends than by their own science.

What body of monks ever deserved to be more respectably spoken of than the celebrated rendezvous of the Basilians at Rossano in Magna Græcia? Of that body the most conspicuous member was Nilus, a very extraordinary character. During his whole life he persisted to refuse donations of lands, rents, and tenements, although he was the founder of many monasteries*.

* Swinb. V. 2. p. 164.

And what man would have been less known to posterity, even in Italy, than that Nilus, if the memory of him, hardly to be found in the Latin rubric, had depended on his legend, and had not been made more familiar to the dilettanti than it was before to devotees in general, by the pencil of Dominichino in his admirable fresco-paintings in the church of Grotta-ferrata near Rome? The profound learning as well as austere life of the Basilian Cenobites, advancing them to general esteem, and from thence to considerable establishments, enabled them to maintain their ground to the sixteenth century.

To those Greek monks both in the East and in Magna Græcia posterity is indebted in a great degree for those advantages in literature and in some parts of ingenious art, which are now enjoyed, and which their care and attention only prevented from being lost. It is well known that by the invitation of Charles the bald they opened a famous school in the convent of St. Nicholas near Otranto, to which great numbers of students flocked, and received not only a gratuitous instruction, but even a maintenance, if they were not able to maintain themselves*. If therefore we have derived from those monks and their establishments strong portions of superstition, which subsequent ages have not been able entirely to work out from the human mind, from them too we have derived those recoveries of refined improvements, on which the human study has been feeding, and growing more strong and perfect, ever since. Let us owe whatever we may to the Arabians as coadjutors, for so we shall call them at present, with those Grecian monks in

* Swinb. V. 2. p. 165.

learning and mechanics; our obligations are exclusively due to those monks on the score of the finer arts. Painting and sculpture were persecuted by the Saracens, and strangely for men who cultivated other arts and learning in general. We all know that they over-ran the provinces of Magna Græcia. It is no wonder therefore that the labours of those monks in devout paintings were found in after-ages, as the legends of the country inform us, in caverns, woods, or wells: they were so many proofs of what was preciously cultivated by them, and of their anxiety to save for better times some portions of art from the devastations of invaders.

Had the great mass of the people felt an attachment to learning and ingenuity, there was enough in the zeal of those monks to have raised those ages, even with all their imperfections and prejudices of system, to a better aspect than that which has been their lot, and to a better appellation than that of dark ones. For want of that better disposition in the people, and of a greater freedom from the shackles of bigotry and imposition in those who studied most, those ages were unquestionably dark. And they became still darker as they advanced, till it was difficult to trace the remains of the finer arts even in those monkish cells, in which they had found their last shelter. They were doomed to share in the universal fall of the empire, which was gone by the reduction of all its provinces long before the Imperial city or the Imperial title were lost.

CHAP. II.

The spirit of architecture much prejudiced at Rome, after Constantine's departure, by the habit of building new churches with the desolated materials of ancient structures—more original at Constantinople, but with far more indulgence of embellishment and shew than had ever been reached by Roman architects—those embellishments pursued with a sacrifice of the regular disposition and proportion of parts, and sometimes with an exclusion of sculpture and painting as too tame to assort with the general lustre of materials—vast number of structures erected by Constantine—their taste only to be inferred from a very few remains, which shew a great departure from the regularity and proportions of order—architecture less improved by the encouragements held out to it than sculpture or perhaps painting—a few examples of columns in a more correct taste at different periods no proofs of the general correctness of the art, or that a bad taste was not prevalent—the wretched column of Marcian, raised within a century after Constantine—the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, how far it now affords any remains of the architecture employed in the age of Constantine; it's present structure considered—the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, as rebuilt by Justinian, a new epoch in architecture; it's structure considered.

It will now be proper to enquire what became of architecture during that long period which elapsed between the removal of the seat of empire and it's final overthrow.

When Constantine had left Rome, all encouragements fled with him. Had not the conversion of his Roman subjects to Christianity, which after a while followed the Imperial example, stimulated the idea of building Christian churches, in all probability architecture would shortly have been lost at Rome in disuse. And the methods, by which they carried it on for the new purposes of their worship, were not likely to do service to the art, by keeping up it's knowledge, it's study, and it's taste, inasmuch as they overlooked it's knowledge, rendered useless it's study, and of course extinguished it's taste. They availed themselves of the materials of ancient structures, many of which were demolished in whole or in part to complete the structures devoted to their new religion. It is true that many of those ancient edifices were useless; and the principle, on which all that had relation to paganism were erected, was too bad to be suffered under the enjoyment of the gospel. But in order to destroy the erroneous principle, it was not necessary to destroy the beautiful edifice. With the same success, and with the same ease, that the Pantheon and many other temples in Rome were converted from all or any of the pagan deities to all or any of the Christian saints, all those temples that were demolished might have been consecrated to Christian worship, if they were wanted; and if they were not wanted, there was no need to employ their materials in other religious structures. As finished forms of architecture, they might have answered an advantageous purpose in the lessons which they perpetuated, had they been suffered to remain, and had a proper security been taken against the impressions of their first uses. But an indolence of genius took hands with all the bustle of new zeal. It was easier to employ materials and designs already wrought than to work

them anew. But what must they be in their new situation? Were the new design precisely the same, and on the same scale, with the old one, which is not very likely, it is obvious how mutilated and disproportioned must be all the parts of a structure that is so rent asunder and demolished; and if they were transferred to measures and designs not their own, the foundation was then laid for a corruption of taste, at least in some process of time, which the most exquisite beauty that might be left in individual parts would only help to facilitate and fix, instead of preventing it.

These observations were made good in the earlier, as well as in the later, churches that were built at Rome with the materials of ancient structures. Such were the churches of St. Mary the elder, and of St. Paul, without the walls. The ancient church of St. Peter obtained its columns, and the main part of its architecture, from the ruined mole of Adrian. The same things were done in other parts of Italy, the whole of which and of the provinces too always followed the measure of taste attained in the capital, and consequently participated regularly in its declension as they had done in its celebrity. Among other proofs which might be adduced, a striking instance now remains in a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and distant about a mile from Nocera in the Neapolitan territories; that church was built by the immediate successors of Constantine with the fragments of a pagan temple, and exhibits in its arrangement a strange combination of ideas, and a want of simplicity and beauty, which shews the decline of the arts in that period, even when they were availing themselves of those fine remains which

the ancients had left*. The fact is, that with those ancient materials the just distributions and proportions of their first form were by no means conveyed to those churches. And how great the declension was, into which those just distributions and proportions sunk in a short period might be seen in the very poor and wretched architecture of the church of the apostles John and Paul, which was built on the hill Cicilo in the time of Julian†.

At Constantinople the spirit of architecture was put more generally to its own talents and exertions. Whatever use Constantine might make of the pagan temples, which he ordered to be destroyed, and which very probably he employed as common materials at least, it is not probable that he pulled them down for the sake of building them up again in the same style. No man could be more desirous than he to give the best exemplifications of the talents inherent in the artists around him, and of what taste the age was enabled to reach in the spirit of the Grecian orders; for they knew not, or they were not accustomed to, any other.

At the same time there can be little question, that the licences, which had been long taken by the Roman architects in the prosecution of those orders, would be seen still more augmented by the growth of habit, especially when they were flattered by the imagination of original conception, and perhaps pushed on by the pride of novelty in a new situation. The eagerness with which Constantine himself was bent upon embellishments, and the sacrifices which he is known to have made to them wherever

* Swinb. V. 3. p. 167, 8.

† Vasari, Proemio, p. 69.

he could, are alone sufficient to make us doubt whether the purity and simplicity of design were equally studied, whether indeed the orders were likely to recover at Constantinople, at least in a hurry, those perfections of consistent character, which had been considerably invaded at Rome. Nothing could exceed, if any thing could equal, that ostentatious shew which was affected in all the architecture of that new metropolis from Constantine to Justinian.

It was not merely that tinsel and glaucous glare, which dazzled and fixed the admiring eye by columns covered with the most refined brasses gilded with gold, or made of the most shining or curiously variegated marbles; by marble linings of the inside walls from top to bottom, whose delicate and glossy surface was defended from human touch with net-work of brass and gold; by roofs gilded over on the outside as well as the inside, and reflecting hardly less lustre from their internal surface than was thrown out to an amazing distance from the rays of the sun collected on the external covering. It was not merely in such effects that the embellishments of their edifices rested: every thing which could be effected in the disposition and proportion of parts, in order to make those embellishments more strong and striking, gave way to their purpose. Those brazen pillars, as they were called, of which we read in Procopius and Pancirolus, were, by the admission of those authors themselves, devoid of regularity and proportion; which they were sure to want, when the great object of them was the glitter that should be reflected from their surface. If the mass of that glitter were consulted, their size would become unnatural for brazen pillars, which they appeared to be; and if real brass were preferred, they would

then become as much disproportioned the other way, and be too weak for use. The same predominant principle of shew would multiply too much the number, or the size, or the elevation of all other columns, while it would render too naked or too full the natural enrichments of their entablatures, in order to introduce the favourite embellishments of borrowed splendor. And the construction of the roofs for the purpose of obtaining within and without an almost meridian brightness, those roofs being frequently built with bricks in order to give a more lasting texture to the rich Mosaics wrought underneath them, while those Mosaics were themselves so profusely gilded that the merit of design was apt to be lost in the richness of dress; the construction, I say, of the roofs for those purposes must have considerably affected the arrangement, and with that the regular proportions, of every part beneath them on which they rested, and from which they sprang; consequently they must have left the true principles of beauty and of the orders more or less overlooked, for the sake of a desultory beauty calculated merely for a momentary gaze. To such an extent was that object carried, that by a decree of Theodosius the advantages of sculpture and of painting too were prohibited even on a Basilica, lest their shade might prejudice the excessive lustre of the edifice*.

As we may infer from the extravagant pride with which embellishments were pursued, that the architects of Constantinople moved upon their own designs, as well as upon new materials selected with great pains for that purpose, so the vast number of public structures erected by Constantine himself will strengthen

* Pancirol. on Not. utr. Imp. 4th word

that conclusion. Besides an Imperial palace, which vied with any in Rome, a forum which imitated that of Trajan, and many noble mansions for the officers of state and the great men who followed him to his new metropolis, numerous churches rose up under his immediate direction. Of these it is sufficient to name that of St. Sophia, though not the St. Sophia which now exists, and that of the apostles, in which his bones were laid to rest, after all the labours of his life, in a golden coffin enclosed within another of porphyry, and guarded by the twelve apostles in effigy*. That coffin indeed, at least the porphyry one, was placed in his life-time in the body of that church, surrounded by those effigies, in readiness for the moment when it should receive him. Of the church of St. Sophia we shall speak more particularly under Justinian, to whom the present structure more immediately belongs. The church of the apostles was falling into ruins in Justinian's time, by whom it was rebuilt and enlarged; but of that structure so rebuilt not one stone is left upon another, unless they could be picked out of the mosque which was constructed with them adjoining to the spot by Mahomet who took the city†.

Indeed the immense ruins which have covered all that was Constantinople in the days of its first emperor, by earthquakes and conflagrations and tempests more desolating than the length of ages, have left us hardly any fragments of architecture by which we can judge of the taste that was then pursued, how far it fell short of Grecian purity, or innovated upon it, how far the splendour and lustre of materials preponderated over an attention to correctness of style. It is only by casual inferences from very few

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 18. lib. 4. c. 2.

† Ibid.

circumstances, that we can form any notion of those things. As far as the remains of any columns, or an assured acquaintance with their dimensions, can assist us in the supposition of the general principles of their architecture, we are happily enabled to avail ourselves of those means.

The round pillar of porphyry, which is said by some historians to have been brought from Rome by Constantine, and on which he placed an ancient statue of Apollo called anew by his own name, only received it's first damage from a storm in the reign of Alexius Comnenus, which carried away the statue, and three of the uppermost tores or joints of the pillar. It was somewhat repaired in a plain manner at the top, but not in it's first form, and was left standing for ages after; it may still be standing, for aught we know; but it was measured by Petrus Gyllius in the 16th century*. As far as we can reason on it's construction, subjecting it to Doric principles from the cornice upon the pedestal and underneath the shaft, there is no approach to regularity or rule in the whole. The pedestal was eighteen feet high, while the diameter of the shaft at bottom was sixteen feet and a half; so that there was no proportion whatever between them on any system of order. Again: the height of the naked shaft or body was eighty-six feet and nine inches, so that there was no proportion whatever between it's height and it's diameter, even on the lowest scale of Tuscan computation. The same disposition was marked in all the other members.

Besides that pillar, there were remaining in the time of Petrus

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 3. c. 3.

Gyllius seven others of the Corinthian order, which he for good reasons concluded to have supported the arches of a portico built by Constantine, and in which were placed the statues of himself, his mother Helena, and others; some have thought that they supported a bridge built by Constantine in the way from his palace to the church of St. Sophia; while the inhabitants reported that those columns stood within that palace itself. Be the fact as it may, they evidently bore the proofs of being erected by Constantine, for on the shaft of one of them was cut his name, and the figure of the cross, with this inscription *εϋ τ'στω νικα*. Those columns Petrus Gyllius contrived also to measure*, although they were buried six feet in the ground; and there is no less disproportion in their parts than in those of the porphyry pillar; for the diameter of those columns is nine feet, and the height of the naked shaft is only thirty feet and six digits; and, again, the whole height of the body, capital, and pedestal is only forty-six feet and a half—a disproportion beyond any thing perhaps that ever was seen on the earth in a column pretending to be Corinthian.

To suppose that those irregularities were followed in the general course of their architecture might seem rather to clash with that display of magnificence and splendor, which unquestionably marked the works of Constantine in the eastern world. And yet it will occur to every one, that the effect of magnificence may be obtained, although it be mixed with imperfect science; and that splendor may gain the applause of the eye, without the symmetry of real beauty. If the reply of Hor-

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 18.

misda to Constantius, which undoubtedly cuts with two edges, reflecting on the deficiency of architecture as well as of sculpture in that period, be considered in it's reference to the former, as well as in that stroke upon the latter which we have already noticed, it certainly challenges those defects in architecture as general, which appear in the particular columns abovementioned. "Try first", said Hormisda, "to build a stable for that horse". Why put that as a trial, if it were considered as no difficulty? But the trial was still more degrading, if we make no allowance for the sally of wit; for it was a stable which he was to attempt, and not a mansion. We mean not to follow that reply further than in gravity we may, as it certainly pays no compliments to the architecture of the age, any more than were paid to it by Constantius himself in his observations on the Roman buildings, which produced that reply.

Taking these views, we may wonder what had become of those principles and powers, which in no very distant period had produced so much better things at Rome. No doubt they had not perished, although their condition was not mended in that city: and as to those which had followed Constantine into the East, they were not likely to find their condition meliorated, where they came with their own previous imperfections among new prejudices for that which was meretricious in art. The fact is, that architecture, more open than sculpture to the influence of caprice and whim, laboured under greater disadvantages than the latter, from the growth of one strange taste or another in the Eastern world; from whence arose a consequence rather new and singular, that when sculpture, and perhaps painting too, were beginning to acquire a new vigour from the

encouragements around them, architecture which had ever gone before the other two, was the last to feel the benefits of improvement.

In that situation we must look on architecture as struggling, but ineffectually, for the recovery of its genuine spirit down to the age of Justinian; after which, with every thing else that was elegant, it struggled no more. It does not contradict this, if some examples occurred in all the periods from Constantine to Justinian, in which the orders seem to have been executed with much correctness. We might allow that the seventeen pillars of white marble, and of the Corinthian order, which were standing on the south-west side of the Hippodrom, when Petrus Gyllius went to Constantinople, and which he grieved to see demolished and carried away by order of the emperor Solymán for the building of a hospital, the paving of a bagnio, the covering of a bake-house, or the raising of a wall*—we might allow, I say, that those pillars, whose capitals were made after the most exact plans of ancient architecture, and whose trabeation was beautifully wrought, were the erections of Constantine, by whom the Hippodrom is said to have been built and beautified†, although others have contended that it was the more ancient work of Severus. We might admit, that in the church built by Studius an eminent citizen near a century before Justinian, the most excellent workmanship in the trabeation of the Corinthian pillars both in the church and vestibule may be taken as a specimen of similar correctness in all the other parts‡. We might go into the reign of Justinian, and allow that notwithstanding all

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 13.

† Ibid. lib. 2. c. 11.

‡ Ibid. lib. 4. c. 9.

the novelty and freedom of indulgence displayed in the church of St. Sophia, the two heights of Ionic pillars and pilasters supporting the roof of the church of Sergius and Bacchus, which was built in that reign, shewed great taste in the finishing of their capitals, in the bold form of their volutes, in the workmanship of the foliage introduced above, and in the art displayed on the architraves*. Those examples might occur, without amounting to a proof that the spirit of architecture was every where perfect in any of those periods. Those instances gave no demonstration that a good taste was generally pursued, or that a bad one was not prevalent. They shewed at most that the former was not then extinct.

It must nevertheless be recollected, that the spirit of architecture is not seen in the correctest construction of a column, or of its more immediate appendages. That spirit must embrace a far greater compass of design; a compass, which is not to be attained by hackneyed precepts, and which the mind must still create, when ordinary calculations have easily ascertained all that is due to the column and its entablature. With respect, however, to the column itself, as the great feature of order, and in its more grand and public exhibitions, that of Marcian is not erased from the books, if it is no longer to be found on the earth, after having been discovered by Sir George Wheeler in a garden at Constantinople; we should recollect what sort of a column that was, which Tatian thought worthy of being raised and dedicated to that emperor within fifty years after Theodosius the great, and within a century either way of the ages of Con-

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 14.

stantine and Justinian—a rude and shapeless pile, without proportions, and without order, whose pedestal was more a mausoleum than the foundation of a pillar ; whose base was but the poor resemblance of what had ever been offered under that name by the ancients ; and whose capital, wretchedly affecting the mere leaf of the Corinthian, was bereft of every thing else that could look like what it was called*.

But to return to Constantine. The same fatality, which has buried from our knowledge the precise condition of architecture under his patronage in his new metropolis, has equally deprived us of many evidences concerning it in other situations. At Nicomedia, which had risen in a manner under the forming hands of Dioclesian, and had been for the most part his favourite residence, Constantine built among other structures a church, which is spoken of as very magnificent ; but it was afterwards overthrown, along with the rest of the city, by an earthquake†.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem is still in being, and has generally been said to have owed it's foundation to Helena the mother of Constantine, in consequence of having found there, or having believed that she found, the true cross of Christ, when her piety led her to that city about the year 326. That account may be granted, although we must conclude that the church was completed by Constantine, by whom at least it was consecrated, after the death of his mother, in the year 335‡. That structure has often been looked upon as a kind of epoch

* See Wheler's Travels.

† Philostorg. Eccles. Hist. lib. 4. c. 10. p. 70.

‡ Ibid. lib. 2. c. 12. p. 474.

in architecture, at the same time that it has been considered by some as exhibiting substantially to the present day the formation given to it by its founder. And we conceive there is no doubt that it does exhibit some strong and clear portions of the taste pursued in the age of that emperor, and for which we have looked so much in vain at Constantinople. It is the only building left, we believe, in the East that does this. Nor is it surprising that Jerusalem should afford those remains of so distant an age which are not to be found in Constantinople, although both have experienced the same vicissitudes of fortune, and have been in the hands of the same infidel masters for nearly the same length of time ; while the structure of which we are now speaking in Jerusalem has not been without suffering its own particular disasters. For we must consider what superior advantages that structure has derived from the unremitting piety of Christians, both emperors and people, which has watched over it ; from its having escaped the desolations of earthquakes and fires ; from the softer treatment, and in some respects the implied protection, shewn to it by its infidel rulers ; from the several religious establishments formed within its walls, and appropriated to the religious of different countries, which have connected those countries with its interest ; and, not least of all, from the natural strength of its situation calculated to resist the depredations of time, since a great part of it is hewn out of the rock of Calvary, which becomes its bed, its lining, or its defence, and gives the shape to many of its chapels or apartments.

Yet with those advantages to carry down to the latest ages many portions of its original works, it must not be looked upon now as the design of Constantine, at least in its external form ;

nor is it's structure in every part to be taken as a sample of the architecture which was pursued in the earlier stages of the Eastern empire. The fact is, that the original structure fell a sacrifice at the investigation of the Jews, as we are assured by Al Makrize a Mohamedan writer, to the irreligious frenzy of Al Hakem the Khalif of Syria and Egypt, between the years 403 and 405 of the Hegira, or 1012 and 1014 of the Christian æra. That monster of cruelty and folly needed not the instigation of that people to commit that devastation, for which he shewed himself ready enough by adding to it the destruction of no less than 30,000 other religious edifices in Syria and Egypt belonging not only to Christians, but to Jews and Mohamedans too; indiscriminately sweeping away every thing that was appendant to religion, and leaving neither friends nor foes to boast a superior interest in his feelings. Before his death, however, wounded by his conscience, or at least becalmed by the excess to which his fury had gone, he permitted the Christians to rebuild their church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and allowed them the free exercise of their religion, with all the former privileges given to that revered foundation*.

To that period we must refer, for aught appears in history to the contrary, the erection of the present edifice in Jerusalem, or of all those parts which were more easily capable of being destroyed, and among those, most certainly the front or external structure. From that period it does not appear to have been much damaged by Saladin, who recovered the city from the successors of Godfrey Bullein in A. D. 1187, unless it be

* Al Makin, p. 261. Jam. Abul. fed in Chron. ad An. Heg. 414.

true that the tower did terminate in a steeple containing bells, and that Saladin threw down both the one and the other from his aversion to the latter*. Neither does it appear to have been much affected by the wars which ensued between the Egyptian Moslems and the Franks, to the latter of whom that city was ceded by treaty in A. D. 1228; for we are expressly told, that when that treaty was made, the church of the Holy Sepulchre and a few buildings adjoining to it were found entire amidst the ruins in which the rest of the city was involved†. Nor is this to be wondered at, when we consider, that in that event, as well as in the former success of Godfrey Bullein in A. D. 1099, the possession of that Holy Sepulchre no less than of the city itself was the object sought by the Christians without, who wished of course to gain it uninjured, and that the security of it was guaranteed, as one may say, by the Saracens within, who knew that it was rebuilt with the approbation of the Khalif himself, and reconfirmed by his protection.

The design or view of that structure, which is easily consulted in the plates that are given of it, particularly in Sandy's Travels, carries it's own proof that the main part of it arose in the æra in which the Mohamedan writers above quoted have asserted that it was rebuilt; for it participates of that various disposition in architecture, which had been gathering in various periods of the Eastern empire, sometimes less, sometimes more, and sometimes altogether departing from every thing that might challenge the spirit and the name of Grecian. At the same time there are parts of the structure, which can only be referred to the age of Constantine.

* Sandy's Trav. p. 125.

† See Mod. Univ. Hist. V. 3. p. 606.

In the construction of the circular building at the west end, which environs the structure of the interior sepulchre itself, and which stands upon a number of square columns in two different heights, stronger if possible than Tuscan, although of no exact order, but supporting a cornice, and forming a cloister above and below; not to speak of the Mosaic figures in niches between the upper gallery and the cornice which terminates the top of the wall; nor to mention the regular Corinthian columns with entablatures, which contribute to decorate the inside of that structure, we see a workmanship which never arose in those ages when the regularity of Grecian orders was gone, by the prevalence of principles departing from them either in whole or in part:—we see in that structure an exemplification of those curious and enriched pannels in marble on the inside walls, which are so highly spoken of in all the eastern edifices of Constantine, and of which Justinian afterwards gave the most extraordinary display in his church of St. Sophia:—we see a cupola rising over the whole of that particular part in all the modesty of ancient principle, compact and kept down within a proper compass, and open too, like that of the Pantheon*.

In the two chapels also, which run up against the rock of Mount Calvary, are several Corinthian columns, and some of them very stately indeed†; as there are likewise others in other parts supporting a cornice.

Those parts therefore must have been the work of Constantine, for we know of nothing done to that edifice between the first

* See the Plate in Sandy's Trav. p. 169.

† See *ibid.* p. 128, 129.

building of it by that emperor and the rebuilding of it by the Christians in the eleventh century.

But in those parts there are some peculiarities, which compel us to refer them to the age of Constantine, of whose architecture it is the proper character, that with some correctness there are great irregularities, with a general shew of the orders there were considerable deviations from their principles.

The bases of those columns are neither all alike, nor are they such as even later Rome, and much less Greece, ever saw under a Corinthian shaft, nor perhaps under any shaft; they seem nearer to a Doric base than to any other, and yet they are but a bastard-Doric, consisting of a plinth, a large torus, a scotia, and a smaller torus. But from that source, or from the æra to which it is related, we easily trace the same deviation from regular principle through subsequent periods; we see it near one hundred and thirty years afterwards in the rude and negligent pillar of Marcian, and we follow it at the distance of another century into the St. Sophia of Justinian, only a little varied there into a fillet above a large torus, and multiplied into four different heights of these decreasing gradually in their circumference as they rise, till the uppermost course receives the shaft in its own proportion.

Neither are those columns, although affecting the same capital, all alike in their formation. It was a strange thought to erect in the middle of the front of the two chapels abovementioned, and as it were dividing the one from the other, not a Corinthian pillar like those in the same line on either side which bound each

extremity of the chapels, but two rods or sticks, as they appear to be, joined together and tied for greater strength, as they had need to be, by two courses of fillets distant about a fifth part of their height from the capital. But we see the same kind of column, sometimes double, and sometimes single, which is still more eccentric and alarming, placed among Corinthian ones in the church of St. Sophia*, and receiving arches that spring from them.

In those chapels of which we have been speaking, the arches that rose from the columns do not perhaps bear much weight, as they seem to terminate in the rock above. But a very singular circumstance was introduced, unknown in the like case both to Greeks and Romans; and that is, a kind of naked tranom or architrave, unconnected with any other work, was thrown across the three main pillars on a line with the abacus over their capitals. If that was done as a sort of terminating line to the eye, it was needless and ungraceful, as the arches above afforded a better. And if it were placed there to strengthen and keep upright the joined slips of columns in the middle, as we have seen iron rods running between pillars in structures called Gothic, it only condemned more decidedly the want of principle which introduced those infirmities.

One thing more we shall observe upon those columns in the situation abovementioned, that the capitals of many of them are poor and meagre; and they are also terminated with a strange novelty by a strange double of abacus above, the lower one sink-

* See the plate in the Appendix to Ball's *Antiq. of Constantinople*, p. 288.

ing in a sort of obtuse angle into the head of the foliage, and without any conceivable purpose breaking into the richness, the beauty, and the strength expressed in it's established disposition. This last point of innovation we do not indeed remember to have seen followed in any other instance; but the hungry capital on the pillar of Marcian will shew us that the first was not lost on the next generation.

Those evidences of departure from better principles were undoubtedly encreased by many others no less singular and eccentric, if time and accidents had suffered us to know them by sparing equally other edifices of the same æra. But while we cannot refuse our attention to those evidences which have been mentioned, it must not be understood that the architecture of that æra was seen in a total departure from those better principles. Some proofs of them appear amidst the imperfections which have been noticed, and proofs which bespeak the workmanship of men who still retained some impression from the architecture of Rome. In the construction of the interior sepulchre itself are the clear features of Roman design, which assure us that so far as concerns that part of the general fabric, it must have been the work of Constantine. There are ten small pillars, but proportionable enough to the height of the wall, running externally round the circular sweep of it's farther extremity, and supporting a cornice with which the wall of the sepulchre terminates above. As those pillars adjoin to the wall, they seem to have been calculated more for the sake of supporting that cornice than of any ornament immediately derived from themselves. Besides these, on the middle of the roof, which is flat, there rises a beautiful little cupola covered with lead, and sup-

ported by six double, but small, Corinthian columns of polished porphyry. Above the arches, which spring from these columns in every space, is raised a modest cornice somewhat enriched, and very suitable to the object. Of the cupola we shall say nothing, because cupolas were affected not only by Saracens, but for a long time by all that followed the Roman manner, as will be seen when we come in the next chapter to discuss the architecture of modern times; yet the cupola of which we are now speaking is not without an evidence that it was not Saracenic, at least, because it is not elevated in the manner pursued by the Saracens after the first great example given by Justinian in the church of St. Sophia; but it is more low and moderate, and is kept within the necessary loading of the hemisphere, as it is seen in the Pantheon, and as it was managed in all the fabrics of the ancients in which it appeared*. When, however, we see that cupola with its cornice below rising from coupled columns, it brings our recollection immediately to the beautiful cupola of the church of St. Agnes at Rome, which was constructed in like manner on double columns, although with some variation from that in Jerusalem, as those columns were within; we recollect that the same church of St. Agnes, if historians are not mistaken, was erected by Constantine himself out of the ruins of ancient buildings†; and therefore we make no difficulty to conclude that the cupola of the interior sepulchre derived its idea from that of St. Agnes, under the hands of men to whom the latter had been familiar, and perhaps under the direction of a prince who had been in the way of admiring it; we are convinced that no Saracenic architects would ever have thought of erecting a

* Wren's Parent. p. 292.

† Ammian. Marcel. lib. 14. p. 27. lib. 20. p. 172. lib. 21. p. 178. Philostorg. p. 62. Nardini Rom. Antiq. p. 174.

cupola in such a style; and consequently we refer without scruple the origin of that which we have been describing to the age of it's Imperial founder, more especially when it's general merit appears evidently to have been borrowed.

If in this mixed way the architects of that emperor conducted their designs, and if we may consider these portions of that great fabric as remains of the taste that was pursued in his age, the front view of it will lead us with no less certainty to the age in which it is said to have been rebuilt. At the same time we must not wonder if in that front, as well as in some of the interior parts, there should be found a degree of mixture of some things referable to it's first age with much more that evidently belongs to the period in which it was rebuilt; as the Christians in the rebuilding of it would naturally avail themselves of as much of the old materials as they could make fit for use, or as their notions of architecture would dispose them to employ.

Thus, at the two doors of entrance are three clusters of columns affecting to be Corinthian, but in the coarseness of their shape, and in the leanness of their capitals, very like some of those pillars which we have noticed in the two chapels, and clustered as some of those are; and we doubt not, if these had not been found ready-made by the rebuilders in the eleventh century, they would not have been made originally then.

Also, over the capitals of these columns there runs a transom or architrave somewhat like that which we have already described in the two chapels, but much richer, and forming a bottom-string to two semicircular fan-lights above, which throw light

into the entrance of the temple. It might appear doubtful, whether those tranoms were of the age of Constantine, or of a modern age, and consequently whether that which is in the two chapels, with some other things that are found there, might not owe it's situation to a later period, if this tranom in the front were not more finished by terminating in a little cornice than either Saxon or Norman builders generally aimed at, and too much enriched with historical sculptures to have come from Saracenic hands; and therefore we must suppose that the Christians of those days would not have studied that dress, if chance had not thrown it in their way.

There is also a string of cornice running round the tower, of which we shall speak presently, under every story or height of windows: this is rather singular in Saxon or Norman towers, and we can hardly conceive that it would have been introduced here, if the old materials had not invited it.

With these exceptions, and perhaps a few others not very important, the general face of the external structure bespeaks the taste which is known by the name of Saxon, rather than any other, but dressed a little by the aid of materials which the hand of time, and the more furious hand of frenzy, had not rendered useless.

The tower, which we have just mentioned, stands at the west end; and is known to be a Saxon production. Every circumstance attaches it to that style. The windows and openings, and their arches, were such as the Saxons used at all times. If some of those arches do not terminate in a semicircle, they are nar-

rowed very little towards the top, but none of them are pointed. In those windows that are of a wider form, as in the lowest story of the tower, are three or four short and thick round pillars attached to the wall so high as to the springing of the arch, and forming a kind of balusters, but intended for the purpose of raising upon them little circular fan-lights within the compass of the arch above. In general the windows are narrow, and divided by stone-mullions, whose arms extend across to either side of the opening in a kind of circular compass which shortened and darkened still more the opening, leaving the space between the top of those mullions and the centre of the arch above to be filled up with stone-work; the opening on either side of the mullion seems to have been latticed.

These circumstances are exactly conformable to the account which Sir Christopher Wren has given of the Saxon style of building prevalent in Christendom at the time when we suppose that part of the church of the Holy Sepulchre to have been rebuilt, and which explains with great precision what is apparent in that tower. He says, "the mode of building in that age was strong and good, not much altered from the Roman. We have some examples of that ancient Saxon manner, which was with piers or round pillars much stronger than Tuscan, round-headed arches and windows, which were narrow and latticed*".

The character here given by Sir Christopher Wren of those ancient buildings, that they were strong and good, is verified in

* Wren's Parent, p. 296. 297.

the whole structure now before us, and especially in its tower, which although it had suffered some ruin at the top when Sandys saw it in A.D. 1611, most probably owed that ruin not so much to the natural injuries of time, as to the injury done to it long before by Saladin on account of its bells, and perhaps in dislike of its steeple too, which it might have had, and yet be a Saxon structure, conformably to innumerable examples. In another observation Sir Christopher seems to be rather mistaken, when he says, "that the buildings of those ages were without "but-tresses, only with thicker walls*." If that were meant of those ancient buildings in England, or if it were not meant to be asserted with respect to towers, it might be better founded; but the huge buttresses of the tower of the Holy Sepulchre is a direct contradiction to the assertion.

It may seem rather strange, when we have seen a cupola at the west end conducted in the chaste spirit of the ancients, that the east end should exhibit another of a very different complexion: but we must suppose that the east end having been more ruined than the west, the ideas of the age in which it was rebuilt prevailed over the deeper studies of the ancients, and made the modern construction of cupolas more estimable to their minds. That they should prefer a cupola there, was natural, as it answered better to the other end; but that eastern cupola is considerably more elevated than the other. Having raised it so much higher above the roof, they seem to have been concerned about the means of ascending on the outside to the top, for the purposes either of curiosity or repair. For we cannot otherwise account for those

* Wren's Parent. p. 297.

little steps projecting from the cupola, which rise by a kind of circular sweep to it's summit*. Whatever was the cause of these, they certainly bespeak a clumsiness of idea, which no purer age would have admitted. The ancients were in no need to concern themselves with such a thought: and even the Imperial restorer of St. Sophia, having determined to consult magnificence in a much higher and bolder elevation of it's cupola, was too refined to mar that magnificence by any thing so coarse and ungraceful. But the shape of that eastern cupola is also remarkable, and carries a further evidence of it's being much more modern than the other. For it is sloped more towards a regular point than the ancient cupolas were, which were kept down in a broader round, and rather flattened at the top, as in the Pantheon at Rome, and in the western cupola of this very building.

We shall only add further concerning the front of that temple at Jerusalem, that it has no pediment, nor is there so much as a cornice seen to finish the walls, but only a simple moulding or fillet garnished with a little scroll. So singular an example, and so foreign from any thing that had been studied by the ancients in Greece and Rome, or that had been pursued by those who came soon after them, or who had seen and considered their works, can leave no doubt to what age we must ascribe so much at least of that immense fabric as relates to it's front view. The architecture of Constantine must have been strangely perverted from all that his artists had contemplated to what had never been placed within their view, if such a finishing as that could have come from their hands. But the Mohamedan writers must have

* Sandy's Trav. p. 125.

known what they asserted; nor does there appear any reasonable cause why their relation should be doubted. They could have no object to serve by representing the original temple as destroyed, if it had not been so, at least in a great degree; and still less would they have been likely to charge the destruction of it on a Mohamedan prince, if he had not done it.

With that celebrated temple our inquiries into the architecture of Imperial ages at Jerusalem must cease. The mischiefs occasioned by time and public confusions have prevented those inquiries from being extended to other public and religious edifices erected there in times posterior to that of Constantine, and particularly by Eudocia the wife of Theodosius*. Those edifices have long ago experienced the same ruin at Jerusalem, which the works of the same age have undergone at Constantinople.

We must therefore pass on to the reign of Justinian, whose church of St. Sophia becomes another epoch in architecture not less distinguished by its singularity than any before it. That extraordinary edifice enables us yet to see the great features and component parts of the form which it obtained from that emperor. Some damages were sustained by it from an earthquake or two soon after its completion, but those were repaired without any material alteration to its form, or to the spirit of its architecture. Some depredations were committed in earlier times upon its ornaments, but the more substantial ones, and the most distinguished, have still been left. Since it has been converted into a mosque, some additions have been made to it, more especially in

* *Anc. Univ. Hist.* V. 16. p. 552.

curious and lofty spires of a piece with the architecture of the Turks, which is reducible to no regular principles : but those additions have not invaded the general system of the structure; they are chiefly detached, and seem more immediately calculated to display at an exalted height the great Mahometan crescent. Comparing the description of that church by Petrus Gyllius in the fifteenth century, with the first accounts of it by Procopius, Agathius, Paulus Florus, and Evagrius, we have reason to disbelieve the reports of the Turks, that it was originally ten times larger than when it was seen by Petrus Gyllius. This last writer solves their mistake by supposing that they included in that edifice the palaces, the mansions of the nobles, and the habitations of the priests, which once adjoined to, and seemed to make a part of it's scite*. He assures us that every part of the old church mentioned by Procopius was then standing, except the eastern portico; in the place of which, probably throwndown by an earthquake, was erected that huge lump of building, which serves to support the east end of the church.

We have said that this distinguished structure offers a new epoch in the art of building. Every circumstance which led the way to it, or attended it's execution, bids us to consider it in that view. It was the consummation of all those innovating ideas, for we cannot call them principles, which from the birth of Constantinople at least had been gathering as excrescences from the great body of Greek and Roman principles : farther liberties than were taken with those principles in that structure could not well be pursued with the colour of preserving those

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 4.

principles at all : with more plainness, and in a smaller scale, those liberties needed not to be carried much farther, in order to make up that peculiar character of building in the East, which we call the old Greek way, as distinguished from the ancient way of the Greeks, and which from that æra became the ruling character not only in the East, but also in Italy, whose wretched fate had left her no alternative but the employment of Eastern artists. Indeed the influence extended to architecture by that church of St. Sophia is hardly to be described. Its spirit reached to the Saracens of Spain ; and to that spirit in many circumstances may be traced what afterwards appeared in the style denominated Gothic. It affords a striking proof, that when once a departure is made, in architecture at least, from the purity of established principles, a door is opened to licentious consequences which are beyond calculation.

We are therefore to consider that church as the grand effort of the age for the display of all that was then conceived most high and ingenious in architecture, and for the display of it in the largest scale. The first talents in the country were brought together for the accomplishment of that design, which employed seventeen years under the direction of Anthemius the first architect of that period*. No encouragements were wanting to ingenuity, no expence was spared or regarded ; it cost no less than thirty-four millions of gold† ; in the language of some historians, it exhausted the treasure of the empire‡. So elevated was Justinian by the completion of that edifice, that when it was conse-

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 3.

† Hist. du Serail. D. Baudiere.

‡ Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 517.

crated, joining his own praises to those of the deity, he exclaimed, "Solomon, I have outdone thee*".

Of all the public buildings erected by Justinian, whose fortune it was, besides many original erections, to rebuild almost every thing that was ancient†, hardly any thing is now left but the church of St. Sophia to tell us what their architecture was. The church of the martyrs Sergius and Bacchus seems to have been standing, and to have been used as a mosque, when Petrus Gyllius was at Constantinople‡. But we cannot consider that or any other of those buildings as contributing to that epoch in architecture of which we have spoken; neither did they disprove it, although the orders might have been executed more justly in them than in the church of St. Sophia. For none of those other buildings entered into the views of ambition, founded on great and daring novelty, which raised the church last mentioned as a signal, and, if possible, an everlasting monument to mark the enterprize of its founder: those other edifices had gained their establishments before: the church of Sergius and Bacchus, as well as some others, was built by him before he arrived at the Imperial dignity§: To follow the Greek orders with chastity had long ceased to be the ambition of the Greeks who lived in those times, and who conceived a higher ambition in making those orders subservient to their own caprices: the orders therefore were not relinquished, but they obtained a dress and a shape which no ancient Greek would ever have given them, and which could

* Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 517.

‡ Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 14.

† Procop. de *Ædific.*

§ Ibid.

never enter into the principles of their constitution. For instance ; *in the church of Sergius and Bacchus, which kept as near to the truth of it's order, the Ionic, as any other of those times, the tops of the capitals and also of the pilasters were decked out with a foliage, a vineal foliage, intermixed with clustered grapes ; which originated from a wretched kind of pun, not very honourable to the tutelar saint of the building, as meaning to shew that it was dedicated to a Bacchus.

The fact was, they were bent upon elegance, but instead of the elegance which was natural and chaste, they had become devoted to other kinds which were false and meretricious. In the pursuit of such a taste the church of St. Sophia took a ground infinitely more extended than had ever been embraced by others. If they had their indulgences, to which the orders were stretched, yet those indulgences were kept within moderation; a modesty was observed, which left the order apparently prevalent, and the eye apparently satisfied, or not violently offended. But in the church of St. Sophia all was unbounded. It was to go beyond every thing in a style of it's own. The object was to astonish by greatness founded on considerable singularity, a vast expence, and an unexampled height. In respect to height, it is said that when it was finished by Justinian, " you could scarce see the top as you " stood within it, and that it was dangerous to look down it's " deep descent from above*." Evagrius, describing it's dimensions, determined it's height to be one hundred and eighty feet from the pavement to the centre of the roof; and Petrus Gyllius, who got the dimensions of it taken as well as he could by a

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 14.

† Ibid. lib. 2. c. 3.

Turk, found very little difference between his report and that of Evagrius.

The roof was of brick, and consequently arched; it was, of course, supported at that immense height by several ranges of columns and arches rising in succession one above another, till they reached the pitch for which they were destined. In that distribution it became very apparent how low the knowledge of geometrical science had fallen, the want of which was followed not only by the want of proportions almost in all things, but by the want of common principles in many. To gain the elevation to which the roof was carried, no height of single columns could be effectual, they must be helped by other heights of columns and arches rising to the destined pitch: yet to preserve the vast expanse which was meant to be opened upon the eye, an extraordinary height must be given to those pillars more especially, which formed the lower range, and at the same time bore all the weight. That those pillars would want every proportion to resist the incumbent pressure, will naturally be thought; for if they had been attentive to the truth of proportion, which in fact they were not in those ages, they must have been fortunate indeed to have found any marble, and much less those curious sorts which they were anxious to obtain, in such large blocks as would have been answerable to the purposes required. It is sufficient to observe that among all those columns there is not one complete in any order.

We shall not dwell on the singularity, which could project the idea of strength to the whole body of an arch by placing pillars underneath its curvature or opening; and, what it is still more

extraordinary, pillars of equal size, when the two extreme ones standing nearer to the lowest part of the curvature must of course be not more than half as high as the two others which stand in the middle. It is more serious to observe, that columns standing upon arches are in almost every part of that immense structure as familiar as arches springing upon columns;—that those arches very often bear with one end of their curvature on a pillar, while the other end is supported by a thin outward wall; and sometimes they spring from the same pillar in different directions;—that the wall, on which those curvatures bear, although they help to support the roof, is in two sides of the church, i. e. the northern and southern, full of windows, and its best strength is that it rises on two ranges of pillars one above another; and in the two other sides, i. e. the eastern and western, neither wall nor pillar supports the great arches which bear up those portions of the roof, but they depend in each of those sides on two other arches, whose crown is kept up by the four pillars abovementioned, two of which are taller and two shorter*. We shall only just notice for its singularity another idea pursued there in all the galleries, of making the columns in the wall to serve for jambs to the windows; a new, and certainly not an advantageous office, more especially for columns whose compass measured no less than six feet. The windows in the galleries one should suppose had come from Saxon hands.

Justinian, or his architect Anthemius by whom that great fabric was finished, appears to have been anxious enough in some respects to give it duration, and at least to secure it from

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 4.

more common accidents ; for he did not employ a single rafter through the whole building. But in those circumstances which have been noticed, and in many others, infirmities were entailed upon it, which did not wait for time to prove them, and which with infinite difficulty admitted of a cure. For the eastern arch, before it was finished, bore with it's weight so hard upon the parts beneath it, that in all probability it would have fallen, if the architect had not been very expeditious to finish it, that it might bear more immediately on it's own curvature, and lie less heavy on the pillars which were ill calculated to do their office underneath*. The case was no better with the two northern and southern arches, which rested with such an unequal pressure on the pillars and foundation, that the tops of the pillars began to fly ; and those arches would have sunk, if they had not been judiciously taken down, and afterwards replaced, when the greenness and moisture of the building was somewhat abated†. By those means the architect was enabled to correct in some degree the errors of his own design, and to save the structure from immediate ruin. But it was not long before other measures became necessary to save it in the same reign, and under the direction of other architects, when Anthemius was dead. The infirmities of the eastern arch were relieved by other pillars more proportionable to bear it's weight ; and those pillars, with the arches that rested on them, indeed the whole eastern side of the church, were still found necessary to be strengthened by erections on the outside of the church from the ground to the roof in the nature of buttresses‡. Those buttresses were from time to time encreased in their number, and augmented in their

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 4.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. lib. 2. c. 3.

strength, yet without curing effectually the original errors of the fabric ; for part of the east end fell at last, with so much of the roof as it had supported ; and besides that, a tower which was raised above the roof, and could have no foundation on the ground, was so shattered that it could not stand*.

These things are not to be attributed merely to the errors of an individual architect, whose judgment was not equal to the undertaking, but to the spirit of the age which could so plan and execute that undertaking ; in fact, to a spirit of adventure, which had left behind it all the established principles of ancient orders, and all the profound studies of geometry, in a design whose magnitude called for the most perfect apprehension of those principles and studies. Instead of having their security, which would have gone along with any scale of structure, that design became crippled and oppressed by its own cumbrous and indigested system, and it was necessary almost to bury it on the outside, that it might preserve its posture within.

* Petr. Gyll. lib. 2. c. 3.

BOOK VII.

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.

The origin and first application of the term "Gothic"—the old Gothic, a degenerated Roman—such the architecture of the Goths, and Lombards—the decline of the Roman into that old Gothic manner exemplified—the Saxon architecture a continuation of the degenerated Roman—the Saracenic in Spain or in Sicily, no origin of what is called modern Gothic—nor the architecture of the Franks, when they became masters of Gaul—that origin not sufficiently found in the architecture of the Normans—the principles and progress of the modern Gothic.

To obtain a proper apprehension of Gothic architecture, it is necessary to understand the extent in which the word "Gothic" is used on that subject. Every man, who finds that term employed, is apt to conclude that whatever relations it may have besides, it was meant to describe some manner of building pursued by the Goths. Whether that application was really intended, or might properly be made, or whether the Goths had in fact any peculiar manner of building, which might deserve to be discriminated, will more fully appear in the sequel of this discussion. It is sufficient for the present to observe, that the term "Gothic" had its origin among the Italians, and was more im-

mediately intended by them to express those ruder styles of building, which succeeded to the Grecian and Roman forms in their purer days. That rudeness growing up in other branches of the arts during the declining periods of the Roman empire was equally characterized by the name of "Gothic". And perhaps there was no term, which might so naturally have been selected by the Italians for the general character of that rudeness, as one that had relation to a people against whom they never ceased to inveigh for their long and extensive triumphs over all the exemplifications of taste which had been left in ancient Rome.

In the progress of those ruder styles of architecture we shall do right if we look to two different epochs. The first preserved some visible marks of relation to Greek and Roman principles, although it corrupted them. In the latter an entire departure from those principles took place, by a system which rose on principles of its own. The former has been commonly marked, at least by us, and some others in this part of Europe, by the name of "Saxon," and has been sometimes called the "old Gothic." The latter, or the "modern Gothic," is peculiar to some other people or set of architects, and has been given sometimes to the Goths, at other times to the Saracens, and again to others both in the East and in the West.

The former of these shall be first considered.

If the Grecian orders were carried into degrees of barbarism by the Greeks themselves in the Eastern empire, we shall not wonder that those, who had only seen them in their declension, should depart still more from their purity, and exhibit that de-

clension in new examples. The Germans were those people, whose various hordes, issuing in successive migrations, had overrun the Eastern and Western empire; and being once established, they left behind them monuments of their power, which of course became monuments of the declension that was not to be corrected by men in their sphere of character. Vafari, therefore, stating the declension of architecture in ancient Rome, has given the general name of *Tedeschi* or *German* to that style or manner which is now under our consideration*. And when that obtained the name of *Saxon* among us and some of our neighbours, it is not improbable that their being masters of this country in the ages which were marked by that style, as well as the abundance of their buildings after they became Christians, might contribute to establish that name.

It is true that the Saxons were not the first of those German hordes, who broke into the Roman empire, and gave the example of a corrupted Roman architecture. The Goths were earlier than the Saxons in those irruptions, and much earlier in a conversion to Christianity, consequently much earlier in the construction of religious edifices, which gave the most numerous proofs of their style. Yet that style had not any approach to what we understand by Gothic, of which the pointed arch is generally considered as the leading feature. In whatever hands that style appeared, and by whatever name it may have been distinguished, whether of the Goths, or Saxons, or any other Germans, it will be found one and the same manner of building, unless it be found more coarse and corrupted as it went down in the order of time.

* Vafari, Proemio, p. 71. 72.

In that order of time it will be more regular that we take a view of that manner of building as it appeared in the hands of the Goths. It may possibly have been thought strange, that a people so barbarous as they have generally been described, and so prone in some periods to the destruction of what had been built by others, should have become noted in any way by their own buildings, or by any works that make men eminent. But justice has not always been done to them. They are not to be considered as a race universally marked with barbarism, and never emulating any of that culture which they beheld in those more polished people, among whom their fortune had brought them. Nevertheless it must be owned, that the testimonies of that emulation are but thinly dispersed in their history, and lie in a short compass. The fruits of it, however, appear not at any time to have been such as enabled them to become the founders of that new style in architecture, which we understand by the name of Gothic. It will be doing justice to that people, and it will not be irrelevant to our subject, if we state what appears in their favour.

They were seen to the best advantage under their prince Theodoric, who, having completed the fall of the Western empire by the overthrow of Odoacer in the year 493, became master of Italy, and was thenceforth acknowledged as its king. He was not to be considered as an usurper, although he obtained that country by conquest; for he was encouraged to invade it by the emperor of the East, who had then the only claim to its sovereignty; and when his invasion had succeeded, he was acknowledged by the next emperor, in whose time that success was effected, as the just and lawful sovereign of the coun-

try*. He is not to be pronounced illiterate, whatever his predecessors or his people in general might have been, and notwithstanding those representations of him which are given in the abstracts of Valesius†; for he was brought up not among barbarians, but in Greece, and the whole tenor of his conduct bespoke a mind improved by a good education‡, as Ennodius the holy bishop of Pavia declared in an oration before him, which must have been a satire, had not facts notoriously gone along with the speaker§; and that speaker too was not partial to him on the score of religion, for the bishop was a most zealous stickler for the faith of Nice, while Theodoric and his Goths were Arians. In him was seen no sort of partiality for barbarians or barbarous institutions||. He retained the same laws and the same polity which had been established before; he gave full toleration to religion, and in the whole administration of justice his avowed ambition was, that the Romans should wish they had come sooner under the government of the Goths**. In his visit to Rome he shewed a more interesting concern for the magnificence of that city than had appeared in many of the Eastern emperors when they viewed it; he was grieved for the decays in its walls and public buildings, and he contributed largely towards their repairs††. He lamented that the necessities of the state forbade him the happiness of taking that august city under his personal protection, and making it the seat of his residence.

* Jornand de reb. Get. p. 698. Anc. Univ. Hist. V. 19. p. 540. Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 483.

† Vales. excerpt. p. 669.

‡ Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 485, 486.

§ Ennod. in Panegy. p. 290.

|| Millot ubi. sup.

** Anc. Univ. Hist. V. 19. p. 540—545.

†† Ibid. p. 548.

Looking on the Goths of Italy through the mirror of that prince, with the additional assurance that they were not only happy under his government, but distinguished from the herd of barbarians by their superior qualifications*, although it were much overcharged by Dion Cassius when he says that they were not inferior in science to the Greeks, we find in that people an epoch very genial in its aspect, and favourable to the support of whatever had been considered by the Romans as salutary, improved, and elegant.

That epoch did not wholly terminate with that prince; for his grandson and successor Athalaric, whose education had been attentively conducted by his mother Amalasonta, shewed the advantages of that education by this sentiment frequently on his tongue, until he was corrupted by his courtiers, "it is the love of learning, and of those who cultivate and teach it, which distinguishes civilized from barbarous nations†." Neither was it in that Athalaric or in Theodoric himself, that those auspicious traits of mind were first seen among the Goths. Alaric a century before at the head of his Visigoths, who were only different branches from the same root, was not a barbarian but in name: there are on record instances of his generosity, which will ever remain sublime lessons among enemies‡. Nor was Totila, who succeeded to the throne of Theodoric in the year 541, behind any of his Gothic predecessors in any of their virtues§. The question is then, whether among the general evidences of those favourable dispositions to improvement they shewed any

* Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 383. 485.

† Ibid. p. 501,

‡ Ibid. p. 431.

§ Ibid. p. 522. 523.

peculiar genius in architecture, which might lead us to refer to them the style which we understand by the name of Gothic. Indeed, what was their architecture?

This question may be answered by proofs which still subsist in a greater or less degree. For after the Goths had become Christians, which first took place in the East under Arcadius* near one hundred years before Theodoric's establishment in the West, and especially after that flourishing establishment had been gained, they hastened like all other Christians to build churches, and like all other people settled under a monarchy they erected palaces for their sovereign. As Ravenna was the residence of those sovereigns, we shall naturally look for what proofs are afforded of those edifices in that quarter, some of which are still left to our observation. The Rotondo of St. Mary, built near Ravenna in the year 530 by Amalasonta the daughter of Theodoric, as the sepulchre of her father, is still considerably existing. That prince himself had erected palaces in that city, in Pavia, and Modena. There were also other churches erected in that period both at Ravenna and Rimini. Before that period, and very near a century before it, i.e. in the year 438, the church of St. John was built in the former of those cities by the empress Placidia; and in a subsequent period the church of St. Vital rose up there in the time of Totila about the year 547†.

What was done by the Goths in that part of Italy, was followed in the same spirit by the Lombards, a German race, and bearing some of the Gothic blood in their veins‡, who succeeded to the

* Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 422.

† Vafari, Proemio, p. 71. 72.

‡ Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 383. 426. 544.

sovereignty of that country in the same century which had seen the loss of Theodoric, the extinction of his family, and the total dissolution of Gothic power. The Lombard princes made Pavia the seat of their government; and there, or in other parts of the dutchy of Milan, and it's adjoining situations, they and their queens erected monasteries and churches. Theodolinda, the queen and widow of Autharic, the third prince of that nation, went with spirit into the measure of art which was before her; she built the church of St. John Baptist at Monza about the beginning of the seventh century, and there she caused to be painted the history of the Lombards, with whom she was connected by origin as well as by marriage, being a princess of Bavaria*. Her daughter Gundiperga built another church at Pavia. Luitprand, later in time, whose reign began in the year 712, and ended in 743, founded in that city the church of St. Peter, besides other churches and monasteries elsewhere. And Desiderius, the last of those Lombard sovereigns, built the church of St. Vincent in the city of Milan, that of St. Peter Olivete in the same dutchy, and that of St. Julia at Brescia in the adjoining state of Venice†. Many of those edifices are abiding, at least in very considerable vestiges, to shew the manner of architecture pursued by the Goths and Lombards.

Vasari, recounting all those edifices in the preface to his lives, gives them as proofs of the *Tedeschi* style; of that style or manner, into which the Roman architecture began to fall with the decline of the empire. There is hardly any need to suppose that those were the works of Roman hands, or of any hands but

* Millos's Mod. Hist. V, 1 p. 73.

† Vasaria, proemio, p. 72.

the Goths or Lombards. The first, who were also the more ancient, were able enough, or they had seen enough of that manner, to execute it for themselves. Having made incursions into the West so early as the reign of Decius, whom they destroyed*; having been used by Galerius and Constantine as auxiliaries in the East†; and having obtained in the days of Valens a settlement in Thrace‡, the Roman manner of architecture in it's later days must have been quite familiar to their observation.

And in those structures every feature marks it's descent from the Roman manner, while there is no one trace of what we understand by the name of Gothic in them all. The strength we discover is huge and massy; it was an emulation of that strength which had been exhibited by the ancients with more elegance; and it was the best emulation by which a declining taste could follow them; it was therefore without disguise, and without dress. The arches are circular; and if sometimes we find the openings square by means of a stone frame covered flat at the top, that only shews the declining hand which had struck out a new way of working upon Roman models, and which now and then chose in that way to shorten the openings which were formed circular above; but those arches are never pointed. The mouldings are always horizontal, and in no instance perpendicular. An entablature is not wanting; but it is such as better suits the coarse and heavy style of the structure than any Roman work of purer days.

* Millot's Anc. Hist. V. 2. p. 279.

† Ibid. p. 384.

‡ Ibid. p. 391, 392.

It will be sufficient if we look with a closer observation on one of those buildings by the Goths, I mean the Sepulchre of Theodoric. In that structure there are some peculiar circumstances, which decidedly associate its design with what had been practised in Greece or Rome. That sepulchre is round, as those of the ancients generally were: we have some remains of Roman mausolea still existing, and all of them round*. The roof is finished as a low cupola; and all the cupolas of the ancients were low, as we have already had occasion to remark. A passage was given behind the parapet round the cupola, the idea of which was furnished by many other ancient examples besides the Mole of Adrian. But in the contrivance of that passage, and in the means of getting out upon the roof, a very material difference occurs here from what had been done in any of the ancient mausolea, not much to the advantage of that of Theodoric, at least in point of taste and elegance. The access to the roof and round it was given through a kind of trap-door in the side of square erections which rise at regular distances on the upright wall, much higher than the parapet, and towards the centre of the cupola a little higher than that part of it against which they abut; and those erections appear to have served for the double purpose of giving a passage through them round the roof, and of becoming so many buttresses to the weight of the stone roof, which shipped upon each of them in the manner of a dove-tail, and fell so much lighter on the upright wall in proportion as its pressure was sustained by those several erections. Moreover, that cupola is formed of one only stone, thirty-eight feet in diameter, and originally twelve feet thick, but scooped out underneath

* Wright's Trav. V. I. p. 144, 356, 357.

answerably to it's convexity above, so as to be now about four feet thick throughout *. We are not certain that any such piece of workmanship as that was ever found in ancient Greece. When Byzas of Naxos was immortalized by an inscription for having invented a roof of marble about five hundred and eighty years before the Christian æra†; and when Andronicus Cyrrhestes afterwards raised a roof of marble wrought in the form of tiles on his octagonal tower of the winds‡, we have no reason to believe that the covering was made of one solid block; neither in Egypt, where we read of immense buildings covered with stone immensely ponderous, are we sure that one only block was employed. It is not therefore improbable, that while the Goths derived from the ancients the first thought of that roof, very few examples, if any, equal to what was accomplished by them in that sepulchre were left to be studied in the ancient world. The church of St. Sophia at Constantinople was covered with slabs of marble; but that could have furnished no idea to the sepulchre of Theodoric, because it was not begun by Justinian when that sepulchre was finished.

On the whole, we find in those structures the bolder features of that *Tedeschi* or *German* manner, as Vasari calls it, which only became plainer and coarser with a further progression of time. And those features shew, that the Goths who were the founders of those structures, and the Lombards also, had no ideas of striking out a manner of building totally new, and independent of all previous models. If in those structures there

* See a print of that sepulchre, by P. Sandby, 1777.

† Pausan. lib. 5. p. 398.

‡ Stuart's Athens, V. 1. ch. 3. p. 19.

appear any ornaments which may be thought capricious, yet they will be found on examination to be rather rude and degenerated than new; they are rather accidental than connected with detail; and they either bear no affinity to that more modern change of style which has been given to the Goths, or one so very remote that Christian builders, acting under that change, may have adopted some of them, without the Goths having had any thing to do with the change in which they are so adopted.

We shall see more clearly the affinity which those structures have to the Roman manner, if we place in a comparative view that sepulchre of Theodoric and the Triumphal arch built in honour of Constantine at Fano near Ravenna*; from whence we shall also be led to a proper conception of the decline by which the Roman architecture sunk in the space of two centuries, and in the very same part of Italy, into the manner of the *Tedeschi*: In that arch the age of Constantine is manifest. We see a vast grandeur in the whole, with some unequal correctness in detail: much of a fine and ancient spirit is distinguished in some parts, with some degree of disproportion, some irregularity, something which in preceding days of Imperial Rome would have been done better, in others. The columns and pilasters are generally true, and have a fine effect; but the foliages of the capitals shew the inferior sculpture of the time. The entablature is striking; but it is not in the simplicity of the ancients; and both its proportions and its parts seem to have been particularly calculated for the admission of inscriptions. The door, which opens into the adjoining building on the right hand is very beautiful.

* See a print of it by P. Sandby, 1777.

in its design, if that were of the age of Constantine, which we rather doubt, for no other reason but because the end of that building comes more than half-way over one of the original arches in the main structure: nevertheless the finishing above that door, which forms a kind of pyramid to the eye, partakes of the tomb-stone, and looks very like the new zeal of that emperor, and of that age, for the religion to which they had been converted. So much is strongly marked by the two figures of angels worshipping on their knees the Madona and Child in the niche, or rather another door-way, between them, over which is suspended in a larger medallion a bust of the Emperor. The features of that age are also strongly marked in the row of niches between the upper and lower cornice over an arch which stands somewhat farther on the right hand: that row of niches carries our ideas at once to the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, where the very same taste is disposed in the very same manner. There the niches were filled with Mosaic paintings of religious characters, and here also they seem to have been so filled.

In the sepulchre of Theodoric if we find the same parts, we find them in a very different aspect. Although the whole be bold and venerable, yet the detail is coarse, and shrunk from that measure of elegance which was seen under Constantine. The arches are open and spacious, but they are not grand, nor have they much effect; they spring from a mere plinth or double fillet, and not from a cornice, and they spring too low, which loses the truth of the semi-circle. The openings are neither equal together, nor equal in their correspondent situations; they are either too large or too small, but mostly the latter as all

the *Tedeschi* openings were; and they are varied without any apparent reason. The whole detail has the appearance of being rather huddled together, and crowded into a great mass, yet without the uniformity of a whole. It is further observable, that in the dead wall which adjoins to that *rotondo* we see the first symptoms of the buttress, which would have shocked the architect who raised that similar wall adjoining on the right hand to the arch of Constantine. Here however it seems to project so little as to leave the appearance of a panel between each projecting part. In process of time it obtained more stretch at bottom, and greater bulk, as may be seen in the tower of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, and commonly in all the structures erected from the tenth or eleventh centuries.

To these observations let it be added concerning that sepulchre, that it seems to have been the first example of that kind exhibited by the Goths, who had long pursued a most extraordinary custom, founded probably in superstition, of concealing the burying place of their princes. That of Alaric was a grave dug in the bed of a small river, whose course was diverted for that purpose; and when they had deposited rich spoils along with his body, they turned the water again into its channel, and then murdered the prisoners by whom the work had been performed*. What an astonishing change of ideas must have taken place in that people, when from the bed of a river they advanced in their choice to the very summit of a cupola? For on that part of the sepulchre the body of Theodoric was reposed, and there it lay for some ages, till it was dislodged either by an earthquake, or by the shot of besieging cannon†.

* Millot's *Anc. Hist.* V. 2. p. 437.

† Wright's *Trav.* V. 1. p. 110.

The Goths then, whatever may have been thought by some*, were by no means the authors of that style or manner of building, to which their name has been given. And the same may be said of the Lombards. The buildings of both were on Roman principles, but considerably degenerated.

The Saxons were no more the authors of that style, which we call Gothic, than the Goths themselves, or the Lombards. Their architecture was a continuation of Roman principles, but more degenerated, at least in Britain, towards the close of their state.

The dispersion of the Saxons throughout Europe was such as might naturally cause them to be marked, at least in those things wherein they became actively engaged. It is said that they first took their name in allusion to the form of the sword which they wore as a warlike people†. Composed of three nations, branches of the same stock, but agreeing in language, customs, and religion, they came originally from Scythia and Cimmeria, from whence they were led by their chief Woden into the northern parts of Germany‡. They afterwards spread along the coasts of the Baltic ocean, and so round to Belgium and Batavia§. In process of time they shewed themselves in Italy by various powerful incursions so early as the reign of Constantius, and although often repressed by treaties, yet they returned in tides again||. After they had gotten possession of Britain, which they had been

* See Warburton's Note on Pope's *Mor. Ess.* V. 3. Epist. 4. p. 292. 293.

† Versteg. *Restitut. Antiq.* p. 21.

‡ Samme's *Brit.* p. 411.

§ Strut's *Man. and Cust.* V. 1. p. 16.

|| Millot's *Anc. Hist.* V. 2. p. 340, 385.

called to defend, the wars in which they became engaged with France under Charlemagne proved a considerable ruin to them as a people, but dispersed them the more. Many thousands of them were transplanted by that emperor into Flanders, Denmark, and other countries. The most resolute betook themselves into Scandinavia*. And the capitularies established upon them in that reign became thorns in their sides, which never ceased to rankle, and to make them restless in their situations, until the age of Conrad II.

Those capitularies had their origin with the conversion of that people to Christianity, after the example of Witikund their general, about the close of the eight century. Those Saxons who were settled in Britain had become Christians long before. Their conversion is dated in the year 596†. Their earliest edifices, therefore, of a religious kind must be sought in this country, although there are a few of equal antiquity in Sicily, and particularly the considerable remains of the old church of St. Sabinus at Canosa‡. They were, after the Romans, the next great builders in the western parts of Europe, especially after their conversion to Christianity; and certainly they were the greatest builders of all the Germans. The incursions which they had made, and the settlements which they had gained, in the empire, had given them every opportunity of becoming familiar with the Roman manner, as it was then pursued: and those opportunities would naturally be increased by their pilgrimages to Judæa, where their veneration for the churches built in Jerusalem by Constantine and others of the Imperial family would

* Millot's *Mod. Hist.* V. 1. p. 112, 113, 127.

† Bowyer's *Hist. of Popes*, V. 2. p. 534.

‡ Swinb. V. 2. p. 321.

make them study with greater zeal those hallowed examples. So they appear to have profited by those pilgrimages, if we may draw the inference from the sameness of style which marks the earlier remains of Saxon edifices and the later religious structures of the Knights-templars, which last were professedly built on the model of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem*. Besides those opportunities, it seems not at all improbable, that the Saxons might have been led to that general heaviness of building, which they always maintained, by the habits which had grown up from the first Christians, whose places of worship were massive and clumsy, because they were built in low and secret situations, often in subterraneous ones; and those habits were not relinquished, when without fear their churches might have been sumptuous.

Under these circumstances we may naturally expect that the Roman manner of building would be prosecuted by the Saxons: and in this country it would not be natural to expect any other from their hands. They had before them many churches and other buildings erected here by the Romans, which had survived the havoc made by the Picts and Scots, and even by the Saxons themselves before their conversion to Christianity. Some of those are specified by Bede†. In the churches‡ first built by Augustin, or by Ethelbert encouraged by that legate who had converted him, we can make no doubt that the Roman manner was pursued. We are led very strongly to infer the prosecution of that manner even in the pagan temples which had been before

* Warburton's Note, ubi sup.

† Bedæ Eccles. Hist. lib. 1. c. 26. & 33.

‡ Ibid. et lib. 2. c. 3.

erected by the Saxons, because we are compelled to look upon them as good buildings, when we find the Roman pontiff Gregory recommending to Augustin that those temples should not be demolished, but preserved for Christian consecration*. There is therefore every presumption, that the ideas by which the Saxons were governed in their religious structures were those which had been shewn to them by the Romans, especially in the decline of the empire, and which they followed as far as their situation rendered them competent.

This observation would have appeared unnecessary under all the circumstances of the case, if a passage in Edgar's charter to the Abbey of Malmesbury, dated in the year 974, had not been either too loosely penned, or construed too largely by some that have touched upon it. The passage we mean has been rendered thus, "the churches and monasteries of my realm, says Edgar, are "worm-eaten and rotten timber†". This has been construed to mean, that they were made wholly of wood, and that they were not built of stone with columns and arches‡. On a more precise view of the subject it will be found more reasonable to restrain the application of that passage to the roofs of those buildings, "which were uncovered or bare to the timber, the "beams were rotted by neglect, and grown over with moss".

It is true, that some of their oratories or chapels, of which mention is made in Bede and other writers, were totally formed

* Bedæ Ecclef. Hist. lib. 2. c. 30.

† Wilkins Concil. V. 1. p. 260.

‡ Somner's Antiq. of Canterbury, p. 8. Stow's Survey of London, V. 1. p. 638. Edit. 1754.

of timber, and covered with reeds*. But all those erections appear to have been done for some temporary use which called for haste, as the baptizing of a monarch; and they were all soon afterwards replaced by structures of stone. It is also true, by the relation of Bede, that those wooden fabrics were a fashion more particularly found among the Scots†. But they were certainly not common in the earliest times of the Saxons. And if in the course of the first thirty years after the conversion of that people to Christianity, such spacious fabrics of stone were raised as the first structure of St. Peter's at York by king Edwin, and the cathedral at Lincoln by Paulinus‡, if in the space of thirty years more, cathedral and conventual churches of polished stone rose up from their hands in a still more extensive scale, and laboured workmanship, exhibiting all the parts and dispositions of Roman buildings by columns and arches decorated, wherever they admitted, with the best carvings of the age; it cannot well be argued that the Saxons were insensible of that manner of building in preceding times, or incompetent to its execution. And that such edifices did rise up from their hands within that period is proved in the conventual church of Rippon in Yorkshire, and in the cathedral church of Hexham in Northumberland, the works of Wilfrid the magnificent bishop of York, which have been with much eulogium described by those who wrote of what they saw, and the latter of which is pronounced not to have had its equal erected in those ages on this side of the

* Bedæ Eccles. Hist. lib. 2. c. 14. Simeon Dunelm. lib. 2. c. 1. 9. Ingulphî Hist. p. 4. 52. Hist. Ramesien. inter 15 script. per Gale. p. 397. Monast. Angl. V. 1. p. 291. Angl. Sacr. V. 2. p. 23.

† Bedæ Eccl. Hist. lib. 3. c. 25. Dugdale's Monast. V. 1. p. 39. 10.

‡ Bedæ Eccl. Hist. lib. 2. c. 14.

Alps*. There were others in that period, besides that elegant and noble prelate, whose religious structures partook of the same sumptuous spirit: among those, the famous Benedict Biscopius was distinguished in the foundation and completion of the conventual church of Wermouth in the neighbourhood of Gyrwit. Nor must the pious Etheldreda be forgotten, and the conventual church of Ely founded by her in the same period with the celebrated structures of Wilfrid, and from the designs of that prelate, or at least under his direction, as it has been powerfully asserted‡. They who would be gratified with a plan and elevation of the remains of that old conventual church may have their curiosity repaid by consulting Bentham's Antiquities of Ely.

It is true, that both Wilfrid and Benedict Biscopius engaged builders from the Continent, and the former engaged some from Rome, to execute their respective edifices in the best Roman manner that was then understood§. But we know not of any such measure pursued in the building of those early structures which have been mentioned at York and Lincoln. There is every reason therefore to conclude, that the Saxons were competent to execute those structures for themselves; although it might then be thought, and may still be reasonably supposed, that the Italians and other builders on the continent were better masters in the style which was either their own, or nearer to their constant observation. One thing, however, is proved even by

* See Eddius vita Wilfridi, c. 17. p. 59. c. 22. p. 62.

† Bedæ Hist. Abbatum Wiremuth, p. 295. Richardi Prioris Hagulst, lib. 1. c. 3.

‡ Lib. Elien. M.S. lib. 1. c. 15. 16.

§ Rich. Prior. Hagulst.

lib. 1. c. 5. Bedæ Hist. Abbatum Wiremuth et Girw. p. 295. Will. Malmesb. de gestis pontif. Angl. p. 272. Eddii vit. Wilfridi, c. 22.

the occasional employment of those foreigners, and that is enough for our purpose, that the ideas of the Saxons as architects were attached to the Roman manner.

The zeal which was so intent upon that Roman manner, and for the best execution of it that could be had, enables us to assert without any risque, that the Saxon architecture appeared to its best advantage, at least in Britain, in the age which saw or immediately followed the exertions of the celebrated Wilfrid. The character of that prelate stands so very high in those times, and so richly endowed with all that constitutes not merely a patron of arts, but a Mecænas, in any age, that it would be a culpable injury to his memory to pass him by with the bare mention of his name. In him was distinguished all the public spirit which could ever dignify private character, and which enables us to see with satisfaction the unbounded liberalities conferred upon him by princes and nobles, all of which returned back upon the country in establishments that gained the sanction of the ages in which they were made, and must excite the admiration of posterity. In him was seen no less eminence of professional talents than in the best of those masters, whose talents he had given by his own munificence to his country. And in him was seen the first reputation which learning had gained in those ages, and which became in him so established through the Heptarchy, that he was the man of all others who succeeded in finishing the conversion of that Heptarchy to the christian religion. His refinements went even to music, in which his choirs became eminently instructed*. It will add to the general evidences of

* Eddii vit. Wilfridi, c. 14. Bedæ Eccl. Hist. lib. 4. c. 2.

Saxon attachment to what was Roman, when we say that it was the Roman manner of singing in which they were taught.

Under all the preceding circumstances it will naturally be supposed, that whatever might have been the earlier progress of the Saxons in the Roman manner of building, that progress both in knowledge and practice became rather extended than diminished. And of this we have sufficient proofs in the course of the eighth century, which next succeeded, and in which we find that style of architecture making its way into the more northern parts of this island; for Bede tells us, that in the year 710 Naiton king of the Picts applied to the abbot of Gyrwi to send him artificers to build after the Roman manner a church of stone in honour of St. Peter*. And in the year 780 was completed by Albert, another munificent bishop of York, that new cathedral on the site of the original one ruined by fire, which the famous Alcuin represents as the completest example of Saxon churches†. In his description of that structure he has brought into his eulogium all the principal members and requisites of a finished edifice, pillars, arches, vaulted roofs, windows, porticos, and galleries, with their proper decorations. Alcuin himself must be allowed a judge, for he, and Eanbald the successor of Albert in that see, were the principal architects employed in the design and construction of that building.

When we see two such conspicuous characters as Eanbald and Alcuin connected with Albert, who was perhaps the greatest of

* Bedæ Eccl. Hist. lib. 5. c. 21.
Sanct. Eccles. Ebor. by Dr. Gale, A. D. 1691.

† Alcuin. Poem. de pontific. et

the three, it must give us a view of that age, at least in Britain, which the general character of it's darkness will make the more striking and impressive. The two first were justly reckoned among the most learned of their time; and the latter of those two was the man who made so great a figure, and occupies such a post of history, in the court of Charlemagne*. Albert from the education of a monastery rose by the patronage of the great archbishop Egbert to the mastership of the celebrated school at York, where he taught grammar, rhetoric, poetry, astronomy, natural philosophy, and divinity. To his studies at home he added all the advantages which could then be obtained from foreign travel, and from an intercourse with the seats of learning abroad. The books, which he had collected in his travels, formed one of the first libraries in this country, and became perhaps the greatest treasure of that library in which they were deposited at York, probably the same which is said to have been founded by archbishop Egbert†. When we have made every allowance for the tribute which the gratitude of Alcuin would pay to the memory of his patron, Albert is entitled by universal suffrage to the highest class among men of eminence in that age for learning, piety, and munificence‡. And when we see architecture rising here from the designs, and superintended by the direction, of three such characters, following others in the preceding generation as great as themselves, all of whom took delight in that study, and had travelled through Italy for the purpose of being improved in it, we shall not be hasty in subscribing to any opinion which may have looked upon the

* Millot's Mod. Hist. V. 1. p. 125. † Will. Malmesb. de pontific. Angl. lib. 3. f. 153.

‡ Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 25. 26.

Saxon architecture with prejudice, but on the contrary we shall be inclined to consider it as regular as the circumstances of the times could render it, at least until the Roman manner became blended with some innovations after the time of Alfred, and notwithstanding the scarcity of remains by which time has enabled us to exemplify their structures.

It is that scarcity of Saxon remains, or the want of attention to seek the best which might either have been found, or have been credibly described, which led Sir Christopher Wren to speak rather contemptuously of that style, though without being at all explicit in his account of it*. That account is certainly very meagre, although it may be literally true as far as it goes; but unquestionably it does not do justice to the Saxons, at least in the ages previous to the tenth century. "Their buildings," says that author, "were intended to retain the Roman manner, but it was seen in nothing more than the circular arch: they had piers or round pillars stronger than Tuscan, but they were without grace, and their walls were thick without judgment. Their windows were narrow and latticed." He quotes for examples the old cathedral at Winchester; the chapel of St. Cross; the chapel of Christ Church in Oxford; and the Royal Chapel in the white Tower of London. Of the first it is difficult to speak now; but the three last seem with every reason to be referred to Norman rather than to Saxon times.

Indeed it is extremely difficult at this distance of time, even where there are strong reasons to expect Saxon remains, to dis-

* Wren's Parent. p. 272. 273. 296. 303.

criminate those remains from the repairs or additions which have been given to them by the Normans. And in many of those structures no particular description of their works has been handed down to us, by which that difficulty might have been diminished. That has not, however, been the case in all. The original church of Hexham, the work of Wilfrid, has been so described by Eddius and by Richard the prior of Hexham, who have been already referred to, and in whose time it was standing, that we are enabled to judge not only of its general disposition, but of its execution in many parts. And in those authors we read enough of the manner in which the columns and arches in that structure were formed, and polished, and decorated with sculptures, to give us a strong apprehension that the example there afforded of Saxon architecture could not be brought to confirm the account which has been given by Sir Christopher Wren. The church of St. Peter at York, if it be taken only as it was rebuilt by Albert about the middle of the eighth century, has been so described as complete in the structure of its parts, that we can have no idea of considering it as an exemplification of Sir Christopher's outlines. The abbey-church of St. Albans, a very important edifice completed originally by king Offa at the close of the same age, and while Alcuin and Eanbald were still living at York, is indeed lost as a Saxon structure in the more modern re-edification of the Normans*. But the old part of St. Peter's at Oxford, supposed by Hearne with good reason to be that which was originally built by Grimbald in the time of Alfred†, and particularly the four front pillars

* Newcome's Hist. of St. Alb. p. 95.—97.
Collect. V. i. p. 28.

† Hearne's Pref. to Leland's

with their capitals quite in the style which is met with in Saxon manuscripts, still speak for themselves, although it was constructed much later in time, and perhaps not altogether in the zenith of Saxon works*. Even so late as the year 1060 there was a fine model of Saxon architecture in the conventual church at Waltham then founded by Harold. It was simple, grand, and uniform, in the Roman manner; and indeed it was so excellent a pattern of the Saxon, before it received its variations in the reign of Henry III. that it might well be thought to have a greater antiquity, had not Mathew Paris left beyond doubt the date of its construction†.

The excellency of that Saxon pattern in so late a date will not hinder the conclusion which may generally be made, that with the end of Alfred's reign the Saxon architecture, as pursuing the Roman manner, had seen its best days. For in every country some examples of better efforts have occasionally appeared amidst a general declension. The church of the Holy Apostles at Florence, among all the ruder works which rose up under Charlemagne, is a strong confirmation of this remark. It is therefore to be apprehended that Sir Christopher Wren, when he gave those general features of Saxon architecture, drew them from some of its latest and coarsest remains, or from some of the earliest and humblest of the Normans, mistaking them for Saxon. When he says that their windows were very narrow, he says true in general, but there was a reason for that, which might possibly be to them a reason of necessity, and that was their want of skill to make glass of larger squares, at the same time

* Strut's Man. and Cust. V. i. p. 34.

† Newcome's Hist. of St. Alb. p. 144.

smaller ones left the buildings dark, which brought in the use of lamps*. But when he says that their windows were latticed, he must be under a mistake, if he meant as he seems to have done until the time of Alfred; for Benedict Biscopius brought glaziers here from Italy, where glass had been in use from the age of Theodosius the great, about the close of the fourth century; and the churches built by him and by Wilfrid in the seventh century were glazed.

With the reign of Alfred, celebrated as he hath been for his genius in architecture†, commenced without doubt variations in that art, which were considered as improvements, but they were at least departures from the Roman manner. Of those variations the cross and the tower were primary instances. And the first example of that kind seems to have been given by that monarch in the conventual church of Athelney in Somersetshire, a model rather of that new fashion, than a finished piece‡. The cross, how naturally soever it might have been adopted by a Christian mind, was a direct innovation on the Roman manner, of which the Basilica was the standard, and that was either square or oblong, and circular at one end. Such had been the general form of the Saxon churches, because the Saxons had found many of the Roman Basilicæ converted into Christian churches under Constantine the great§. The tower was thought of, and made a part of religious structures, whose walls were also finished by a battlement at top, because in that reign the study of archi-

* Strut's Man. and Cust. V. 1. p. 35. † In arte architectonica summus. Malmesb. de reg. Angl. Floren. Wigorn. ad annum, 887.

‡ Monast. Angl. V. 1. p. 202. Benthams Ely, V. 1. p. 30.

§ Camden's Brit. col. 780. Ed. Gibson. Benth. Ely, V. 1. p. 29.

ecture, which had ever before been confined to churches, became what is called civil, and launched forth into the erection of fortresses and towers. But those things, which were just shewn to the world by Alfred, were brought into more established use in the next age by Edgar, who appears to have given the first settled example of the cross and tower in the abbey of Ramsey in Huntingdonshire*.

The use of bells, which gradually came into vogue, gave an establishment to towers which they never lost, because without those strong and high raised structures bells could not have been indulged. They were first brought into churches at Nola by Paulinus bishop of that city in the fifth century; but the use of them both there and in other parts of Italy on sacred and profane occasions may be traced from heathen times†. In this country they appear to have been fixed in some monasteries so early as the seventh century, which was immediately after the Saxon rulers became Christians‡; although it is probable, that such large ones as required distinct towers for their support might not have been in use till the reign of Edgar in the tenth century§. When towers had once been introduced in religious structures, they came next to be built not only for the necessary use of bells, but often for ornament in different parts of the fabric; and then spires were added, as they were conceived to form a better termination.

* Hist. Ramefienfis, c. 20. p. 399. inter 15 script. edit. per Gale. Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 28, 29.

† Swinb. Two Sicilies V. 1. p. 152.

‡ Bedæ Hist. lib. 4. c. 23. Monast. Angl. V. 1. p. 40. lin. 52. Math. Westm. ad ann. 946.

§ Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 29.

There is another circumstance worthy to be remarked in the architecture of the Saxons, not so much for any certain variation which might have taken place at any particular juncture, as for a more constant singularity which seems to have attended it, and which wherever it was indulged was certainly a departure from the Roman manner; I mean the habit of employing historical sculptures on the capitals of columns. The columns being large, their capitals if left deep would admit a story in their compass. Those sculptures appear to have been done from the first, at least in this country. In the history of Wilfrid's church of Hexham they are spoken of with the greatest applause*. In the account of the old conventual church of Ely we have eight plates of them preserved†. It might be accident or caprice more than system, which occasioned the emblematic figures, instead of matter of fact sculptures, on the capitals of the columns in St. Peter's at Oxford, in the time of Alfred‡. But whoever will inspect those emblematical figures, will easily trace their progress from the Greeks and Romans, although they were never employed by either of those people in any such situation as they were suffered by the Saxons to occupy.

This observation is sufficient, without going further into those habits of sculpture, for which the present is not the proper occasion. On the whole it appears, that in whatever respects the Saxons may have degenerated from the Roman style, it was always in their contemplation to keep to it as well as they could, and that what we understand by the Gothic style of modern times had no foundation in their buildings.

* Richardi Prioris Hagulf. lib. 1. c. 3.

† Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 48—59.

‡ Strut's Man. and Cust. V. 2. plate 1. No. 4, 5, 6, 7.

It cannot be considered as founded in their buildings, although it be true, and a further instance of the innovations which had crept into their architecture after the time of Alfred, if not as early as his reign, that they were fond of introducing intersecting circular arches, particularly against dead walls, as it were to break by that kind of ornament the heaviness of the structure. Hertford Castle, erected in the year 909 by Edward the elder son of Alfred, seems to have led the way to that idea*, which was followed almost ever after not only by the Saxons but the Normans too†. If those intersecting circular arches be conceived to have furnished any hint to the pointed arch, we must say that the Saxons rose very quick upon their own hints, because the pointed arch itself most certainly began to appear in most of their later structures, about the time of Edgar. We see it plainly over the flank windows of the eastern projection in the old conventual church at Ely, as repaired by Edgar in 970‡. And to those who will enquire it will be found in the remains of many other works of that period. But we do not consider the pointed arch, as a single and detached circumstance, to be any sure index of the Gothic scheme as then existing. We shall hereafter have occasion to mention where and in what antiquity that circumstance has been found, without the possibility of its being considered as a part of that scheme.

In the order of connexion it might be most natural to proceed from hence to the consideration of Norman architecture, but in the order of time that of the Saracens will engage the preference.

* Grose's Antiq. V. 2. p. 241.

† Ibid. p. 111. et passim..

‡ See the plate, Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 28.

We shall not find the origin of modern Gothic, as it is called, in their works.

These were a people competent to strike out any thing in genius. They were enlightened enough for any discovery to which their minds were directed. They were for more than two centuries the great depositaries of learning and science on the earth, while others were sunk in barbarism and darkness; and so long as they maintained in splendor their several stations in Europe, they were capable of being it's universal instructors, with very few exceptions, and they were the only instructors it had, saving the Basilian Monks that were settled in Magna Græcia. It was by their frequent communications with the Greeks that they had acquired a taste for learning and elegance, together with the language of that people*. They had with great diligence translated the best Greek authors into their own Arabic; and to those translations the western world was afterwards much indebted for regaining the learning it had lost. The courts of their califs at Bagdad, and that of Abderaman or Almanzor in Spain where he reigned gloriously, were the seats of elegant magnificence†. It is true that the polite arts did not engross so much of their study as the more mechanical ones, for reasons which made a part of their religion; nevertheless they embraced architecture with great warmth; perhaps their mechanical science found in that branch of polite art a larger field for it's gratification; it was also in favour of that study, that while it did not come within the scope of those religious reasons which discou-

* Millot's Mod. Hist. V. 1. p. 76, 111, 120.
V. 2. p. 59—61.

† Ibid. Swinb. Spain,

aged painting and sculpture, it had other arguments of religion on its side; so that the Saracens were led to cultivate its grandeur by the same religious considerations which had ever furnished a primary ground for that study to any other people on the earth. It was among them that Mahomet gathered his followers, and established his Alcoran. As new converts, they would naturally feel as much zeal for the honour of their faith as had been shewn by others who had ever felt the energies of conversion, especially when they had embraced a religion peculiarly calculated to inspire enthusiasm. They therefore turned their minds to the building of mosques and sepulchres.

Few points in historical research have been more generally understood and admitted for a long time than that the structures, which we call by the name of modern Gothic, and which are found in every part of Europe, are to be referred for their origin to the Saracens, if the Goths themselves were not the inventors. Even those, who have given them to the Goths, have made Saracens the master-builders. When we look on those structures, not only new in their principles, and independent of all established forms, but proceeding on principles singularly nice and intricate, we do not readily perceive any other people but the Saracens capable of giving birth to those principles, and of laying the foundation of those designs in those ages. The similarity of those structures in their whole detail to the ramifications of groves has also been urged as a reason for referring their origin to the Saracens, who worshipped in groves while they mixed with the pagan world. From thence, however, no sure conclusion can be drawn, because the

Goths themselves so worshipped before they were Christians, and so the ancient Gauls and the ancient Britons worshipped, with all the rudest ages of the pagan world.

Of late a different opinion, formed on fuller investigation, seems to have been entertained by many, and particularly by a modern traveller*, who has viewed with great attention some of the earliest and most celebrated structures of the Saracens, in which he could not discover any thing like an original design, from whence the ornaments or parts of what is called modern Gothic might be supposed to be derived.

Sir Christopher Wren professes to have taken some pains in this inquiry, although he has not vouchsafed to communicate any traces of his research, the result of which was an opinion that ran between the two different ideas abovementioned, viz. that the architecture so denominated Gothic was, in fact, “ Saracenic re-fined by Christians†”.

It was certainly not disclosed in the earliest structures of the Saracens. There are two of those very early structures now standing, which enable us to reason on this subject with the best confidence; one of them is the ancient mosque, now a cathedral, at Cordova in Spain, which was begun to be built in the year 786 by the great Abderaman or Almanzor, who founded the kingdom of the Saracens or Moors in that country, and was finished by his son Hassem before the year 800. We see it now

* Mr. Swinburne, Spain, V. 2. p. 262.—268.
p. 297. 306.

† Wren's Parent.

just as it was a thousand years ago, some parts excepted, which do not affect the general frame and spirit of the building*. We pass by the Saracenic or Moorish palace, called the Alhambra, in Grenada, because that was built near half a century later than the other† and therefore too late to afford either a proper view of the earlier ideas of Saracenic architecture, or any foundation for the Gothic, which had been established in Europe long before the Alhambra was thought of. The other Saracenic structure is the Torre Zizza near Palermo in Sicily, which was erected by a Sultan during the dominion of the Saracens in that country, and from some circumstances connected with the peculiar letters inscribed on each stone of the battlement it should seem to have been constructed in the course of the ninth century‡. In this edifice no alterations worthy to be mentioned have been attempted by modern hands.

The mosque above mentioned is then the older structure, perhaps by near a century. It must be the oldest Saracenic structure remaining in the European world. The spirit of its architecture is certainly Roman, or at least that Roman which was seen in Constantinople in the days of Justinian, and was exemplified in his favourite church of St. Sophia. There is but one novelty, and yet a very important one it is, which is not seen in that proud and eccentric work of Justinian, and that is, the form of the horse-shoe given to the arches, where they are not quite circular. In other parts we see columns in all proportions and disproportions, affectations of capitals, columns

* Swinb. Spain, V. 2. p. 83.—93. 264.

† Ibid. V. 1. p. 220.

‡ Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 336. 337.

standing upon columns, and arches rising over those successions. Yet, with the exception above mentioned, all those parts were Roman, and mostly wrought by Roman hands before they were so put together in that mosque; for they were taken from ancient Roman buildings, which were stripped in many situations and transported to Cordova, from fear of the Calif, and particularly at Narbonne which abounded with monuments of antiquity*. When they came to be applied in that mosque, many of them naturally lost their first purity and proportion, if in other respects they were not awkwardly bestowed; the pillars were no longer of their original height, to those that were too short they added monstrous capitals and thick bases, and those that were too long had their base chopped off, and a shallow capital placed upon the top. We see the roof rising in cupolas, but not all of them the modest cupolas of the Romans; one was higher than the rest, and terminated with three golden balls bearing up a pomegranate and a flower de lis of the same precious metal. With the general preservation of Roman design there was all the emulation of eastern splendor. The columns were of the richest marbles, varied according to the course of the ailes by rows of different colours, viz. blue with white veins, yellow, red, red veined with white, gray, and Granadine and African green. The principal entrance had its folding doors covered with plates of gold. The twenty-four gates were plated with bronze embossed in a most curious manner.

If it should appear strange to find so much Roman workmanship as well as Roman design, together with so much Eastern taste and manner, employed by the Saracenic architects, of

* Swinb. Spain. V. 2. p. 62, 63.

whom we are bidden to entertain the highest conceptions, let it be understood that it was a primary policy of the califs in Spain, for reasons of state, to keep up the closest connexion with the court of Constantinople ; and it was no disparagement of their taste, but rather an evidence of their unassuming minds, that they sought to avail themselves of what had been done by the great masters of the world, and to imitate at least what was considered as elegance in the best school of artists then existing. There was enough to shew their architectural powers in the disposition of what they had determined so to embrace.

We may therefore easily account for that influence of Roman and Constantinopolitan taste, which shewed itself in the architecture of the califs of Spain. Habituated as they were, by their commercial* as well as political intercourse with the Eastern empire, to the observation of whatever was most conspicuous in it's works, it was hardly possible for them to shun that influence, if they were not bigotted to other ideas of their own. Nor was it less natural for them, with all their enlightened talents, to admit that influence, than it was for the Goths before them to have been guided in their best days by Roman ideas, or for the Romans themselves to have embraced the principles of the Greeks. So strong and constant was that influence on their spirit of architecture, that Abderaman or Almanzor the third, who succeeded to the throne about a century after the first prince of that name, received from Constantinople it's most celebrated architect to design and execute a palace which was called by the name of his favourite mistress, Zehra. And for that edifice the

* Swinb. Spain, V. 2. p. 75, 76.

Greek emperor made him a present of 1114 columns of African and Spanish marble, 19 of Italian, and 114 others of most exquisite workmanship. The walls were encrusted with marble, like those of St. Sophia, inlaid with golden foliages. And all the sculptures of which there were many, not excepting a statue of the favourite sultana, although contrary to the express law of the prophet, were wrought by the first masters in Constantinople*. Of that edifice it is remarkable that there is not now remaining one stone upon another, nor is the spot to be ascertained on which it stood†. The conversion of the mosque into a cathedral has been the means of rescuing that structure from the common desolation of all the rest which were raised by the Moors.

The question, then, is reduced to a single point, whether in the singularities of the Saracenic architecture we can reasonably find the origin of the forms denominated Gothic. It is true, that in tracing the progress of singularities in mechanical theories or practice we wander without a guide, and very often instead of solving what we follow, we need some one to solve what we advance. The ingenuity of the human mind is strong, where it is cultivated at all; and there is no saying how far a hint supplied by one singular circumstance may be pushed by those who are intent on new theories or new practice. If this discourages decisive opinions, yet it hinders not the course of reasonable argument, and in that way we shall come never the later to the best conclusion.

* Swinb. Spain, V. 2. p. 66, 67.

† Ibid. p. 80,

The cast of many of the arches in the form of a horse-shoe, although they sometimes come to a perceptible point, and in the Alhambra of Grenada they are found more plainly pointed, can afford no proper clue to the pointed arches of the Gothic, which might just as well, and indeed much better, be deduced from examples in which those arches will hereafter be found in very high antiquity, and in different parts of the world. The author, to whom we have already referred for an account of the Spanish mosque, has judiciously selected from the peculiarities of that structure other circumstances which must become the grounds, if any are there afforded, of tracing the Gothic from Saracenic forms, and which in the present discussion we shall borrow from him. The grouping of the pillars in the Saracenic and Gothic fabrics is very different. In the former they never touch, or grow as it were into each other, which they do in the latter; where, besides, one or two arches often spring from a small member of an entablature, while in the former there is always a thick architrave at least to support the arch, and commonly an upright piece of wall to resist the lateral pressure. The capitals employed in Saracenic fabrics are resembled neither in design nor proportions by those that have been hitherto remarked in Gothic churches. In these last the porches and doors are deep recesses, with several arches one within another; whereas in the former the sinking back of the arches over the entrances is scarce perceptible, they are almost of an equal projection with the wall of the building. The very modest elevation of the roof by the Saracens, if that of the Spanish mosque be taken as a precedent, the smallness of their windows so as not to admit any great quantity of light, and the rounding of their buildings into domes and covered roofs, could never become examples to the

extreme loftiness of Gothic designs, the great length and number of windows in those designs, and the towers, spires, and pinnacles that shoot up from the whole. If it should be thought, that the slender square minarets of those mosques, terminating in a ball or pine-apple, might lead to the pinnacles at least, if not to the spires or towers of Gothic fabrics, yet it is not to those mosques that the reference should exclusively or originally be made for those examples, which had been seen before in the church of St. Sophia. If it be imagined that the filigree-work in stone, with which the windows of those mosques were filled, in order to diminish the light, gave the first thought of painted glass in structures called Gothic, as well might that thought have been derived from the lattices of the Saxons. If the grouping of pillars in those structures close together be conceived to have originated from the practice of the Saracens so little different from the other; that may possibly have been the case, and yet it will not be sufficient to place the source of the Gothic style in the hands of those Saracens.

So far then as the very ancient mosque of Cordova may stand as an example, and surely it may, of the style employed by the Saracens, it does not appear that the Gothic forms were in any respect exemplified in the architecture of that people in Spain.

Let us see if their architecture in Sicily will throw more light upon the question. The Torre Zizza is in a very different style from the mosque of Cordova. That difference may be expected, because it is not a religious edifice, but a tower or castle. And it is so far an advantage to our view, that we are enabled to see the variety which took place in the

different classes of their buildings, and among different branches of that people. The circumstance, in which the Torre Zizza chiefly differs in its character of building from the other, is the form as well as number of its windows. As it is from Mr. Swinburne's drawings that our remarks on that building are made, we must observe that either the engravings done from thence are not extremely correct, or there is some material difference between their representation and what the author has written on that edifice*. Those plates certainly exhibit the general arches over the windows as rather sharpened at the top. But the author declares that they are almost round, in the old Saxon manner, instead of being pointed, or arched in the form of a horse-shoe. They were also very long; with one remarkable circumstance, that the real opening of the windows is but half the length of the frame, which terminates in an arch above, and which is filled above the real opening by the solid wall of the structure. In one part the windows like many Saxon ones are formed by a stone frame around. There is not a cornice in the whole elevation, but a double string which runs between the floors, and turns up rather singularly in a perpendicular direction in the middle story, to divide as it were the centre from the two side parts of the front; the top is terminated by a battlement. That battlement is very plainly a Roman idea, having an inscription in a large capital letter on each stone of the battlement, in the same manner as may be seen on a bridge at Rimini begun by Augustus, and finished by Tiberius†. There is nevertheless a remarkable singularity, which shews very plainly its Saracenic origin, and that some

* Swinb. *Two Sicilies*, V. 3. p. 337.

† Wright's *Trav.* V. 1. p. 118.

things which have distinguished the Spanish mosque were not confined to the Saracens of that country. What I now allude to are the portions or segments of the horse-shoe, forming so many scollops, and rising in gradations on each side, till having by those successions formed a very long arch, they meet at top completing the horse-shoe. In the gate of the Zancarron or chapel of the Alcoran in the Spanish mosque that scheme is seen with various curious interfections, formed by the similar construction of higher arches above lower ones, yet without losing any proportion of shape in any of those interfections, but indeed gathering new strength from each, and constructing by that means a larger and more expanded arch to the eye, when it loses for a moment the intermediate columns and the parts attached to them, which constitute either side of the two under arches. In the entrance of the Torre Zizza the same scheme is seen, rising in those gradations of scollops which meet in the horse-shoe at top, and forming three successions of arches, each of them more enlarged than that which is immediately under it, but without any interfections.

How far in that building, or in others probably erected by the same people in that country, though now destroyed, the parts which we have mentioned might have led to any portion of detail in the character called Gothic, it is difficult to pronounce; but certainly that character was not seen in the Saracenic structures of Sicily any more than in those of Spain. At the same time it is true, that the influence of the Saracens as architects in Sicily, which had so long been their residence, and the feat of their power, was considerable as it might be expected. The Puglians learnt from them and their taste what was after-

wards exhibited, and is still to be seen, in the construction of the great gate of the monastery of St. Clare*. And that influence extended to the Normans, who supplanted them in that country, as is abundantly proved not only in the Mosaic works of all the churches which were founded by the Norman kings of Sicily, and which we must conclude to have been wrought by the Saracens, or by their scholars among the Greeks†, but in many features of great structures themselves, as in the Benedictine convent of La Trinita in the district of La Cava‡, and also in the cathedral of Salerno§. That influence interfered in one respect even with the operations of the modern Gothic, as is seen in the cathedral of Palermo erected in A. D. 1185, whose choir terminates in the arch of an horse-shoe||.

Before we come to speak of the Norman architecture, there was a period in which the Franks were concerned, and which in point of date should bring them under our notice prior to the Normans. A short observation, however, on their manner of building will be sufficient, after what has been said of the Goths and Lombards. For from the time that the Franks became masters of Gaul, by the annihilation of the Roman power in that country, which must be reckoned under Clovis in the year 486**, all their architecture, as well as that of the Goths, was a continuation of what was understood to be the Roman manner. They fell in, as was most natural, with the general ideas of those ages; and overlooking the fine examples which the ancient Ro-

* Swinb. *Two Sicilies*, V. 1. p. 282. † Ibid. V. 2. p. 281. V. 3. p. 172, 173, 178. V. 4. p. 178. ‡ Ibid. V. 3. p. 173. § Ibid. p. 177, 178. || Ibid. V. 3. p. 301. ** Millot's *Anc. Hist.* V. 2. p. 452, 487. *Mod. Hist.* V. 1. p. 65.

mans had established even in those distant provinces, at Orange, at Autun, at Nîmes, at St. Remi, at Bourdeaux, and other places, they were contented to follow the track of declension, which was then in vogue*. In that way abundance of churches and monasteries were raised by the first and second race of French princes from Clovis to Charlemagne, and still later; a period comprising three centuries at least. Some of those monuments are seen in the church of St. Peter and Paul, now called that of St. Genevieve, at Paris, the foundation of Clovis; in that of St. Germain des prez, erected by his son Childebert; in that of St. Denis, constructed by Dagobert his grandson in the third degree, and in the seventh century; and in all the churches raised by Charlemagne throughout the empire, except that of the Holy Apostles at Florence, which was destined for a memorial of his visit to that city, and for which he must have been indebted to the remnant spirit of taste among the Tuscans, who seemed to hold to the last whatever portions of ancient taste were possible to be preserved†. Nevertheless, in none of the buildings by the Franks in those periods was seen the origin of what is denominated modern Gothic.

We have intimated that the Normans, more celebrated after they had supplanted two such enormous powers as the Saracens in Sicily in the year 1072‡, and the Saxons in Britain a few years before, became marked as architects. Yet they were not authors of the modern Gothic. It is difficult to name that of which they were authors in their manner of building; hardly

* Monier Hist. lib. 2. c. 11, 12.

† Ibid. Vafari, Proem. p. 72.

‡ Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 276.

can we specify the buttress. And yet no people in modern times built more than they. They appear to have had no settled ideas on which they proceeded, beyond expanse and massive strength. If there was any manner to which they more commonly adhered, it was the Roman, or perhaps to speak more properly, the Saxon*. The circular arch was their great feature; their mouldings were horizontal; and all other parts connected with that style were pursued with that sort of execution in the main, which had been observed under the Saxons. So it was in Sicily, as may be seen in the principal edifices of Leece, the capital of Terra di Otranto, as well as in its cathedral erected by Tancred in the twelfth century, and also in that of Girgenti†. So it was in their own country; and so it was at least in their earliest structures in England, of which some have set down the priory church of St. Botolph at Colchester as one of the oldest examples. The design of its gate may still be consulted‡. But that example only classes with the time of Henry I. and the year 1109. There were others more ancient—the castle of Colchester, built in the first Norman style by Depifer steward to William the conqueror in the year of his accession, 1066§—the abbey-church of St. Albans, still exhibiting many and great features of its Norman construction in 1077||—the conventual church of Selby in Yorkshire, founded while the conqueror was living**—the church of St. Paul erected by Mauritius bishop of London in 1083††—and the cathedral of Norwich, as it was

* Strut's Man. and Cust. V. 1. p. 102. Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 33.

† Swinb. V. 2. p. 286. V. 4. p. 10.

‡ Strut, *ibid.*

§ Grose's Antiq. V. 2. p. 113.

|| Newcome's Hist of St. Alb. p. 93.

** Dugd. Monast. V. 1. p. 371.

†† Wren's Parent. p. 273.

finished in 1096*. As an example of Norman structure in it's first manner we might adduce the present conventual church of Croyland in Lincolnshire, although it was erected somewhat later in time by Ingulphus the Norman, as Dugdale assures us†; but of all the works of that people there are none that we know of more simply and compleatly Norman than that edifice, or more unmixed with other ideas than those on which they had long proceeded to build as followers of the Roman manner. In all respects except the buttress, the tower, and spire, it's principles were Roman: except the greater openings of it's windows, it's height, and expanse, added to those buttresses, it's appearance was the later Saxon.

Sir Christopher Wren, whose inquiries naturally carried him into this subject, confirms the general account of the Roman manner, and also of the massive strength, which prevailed in the Norman buildings. At the same time he clearly expresses that Roman manner to be a degenerated one, and leaves us possessed of the idea that the strength which they so affected was not always judicious, if in many instances it was not a deceptious strength, merely striking the eye. In the elucidation of such a stricture on their architecture he certainly has done no credit to their skill. He says, that they were not only irregular in their measurements and their levels, but that they did not give sufficient abutments to resist the weight of the roof; and that their pillars, being only cased outwardly with small stones, while the inside was a mere core of rubbish and mortar, were in reality infirm and unequal to their uses. It is of less import-

* Dugd. Monast. V. 1. p. 407.

† Ibid. V. 1. p. 164.

ance what he charges on their want of taste and judicious arrangement; in consequence of which nevertheless, he says, the thickness of their walls was wasted in some places, while it was wanted in others, and the general heaviness of their buildings was attended with an irregularity and deformity in many circumstances, which was of more moment than to the eye, as in the intercolumniations, and in the positions of the buttresses*.

The author of those strictures has not contradicted other testimonies concerning the Norman skill. The character, which that people has obtained as architects in Sicily, has terminated in no better advantage. There, where every known style in the world had prevailed by turns, they seemed to be followers of all that had gone before them, making up their designs, if such they may be called, with portions collected from various styles. Thus in one and the same edifice was sometimes seen the incongruous assemblage of Saxon and Gothic†, of Norman and Saracenic‡, of Saracenic and Grecian§ of Grecian and Roman corrupted by the modern imitations of both||.

In some measure the case was the same with the Normans in England. They fell into the habits of the later Saxons, which by degrees they extended, and varied in some respects, as they were led by circumstances and the progress of ideas. The tower and battlement were as contemporaneous to their martial notions as to those of the later Saxons, and therefore these were

* Wren's Parent p. 273, 275, 276.

p. 335.

‡ Ibid. p. 173.

|| Ibid. V. 4. p. 10.

† Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3.

§ Ibid. p. 177, 178.

seen on their churches as well as on every larger edifice. The spire was not neglected, but it affected neither grace nor eminence at first, it rose short and squat upon the tower. The openings of the windows had gained more width among the later Saxons, as they had become more acquainted with the making of glass in larger squares; and as the Normans had been in the way of gaining that knowledge rather earlier than the English, their windows of course were made capable of receiving a greater increase of light. We have already observed that the later Saxons had obtained the notion of throwing their arches sometimes into a point, to which we apprehend they were led by consulting the convenience of their materials, as those arches could be formed of small stones more easily than circular ones; we therefore meet with few examples of earlier Norman works here, in which something of the pointed arch does not appear among others, and especially those interlaced or intersecting arches of which we have spoken*.

Dugdale has preserved the design of a church at Hulme in Norfolk, taken while the building was standing, which to the curious inquirer will afford in some parts of it the most singular example of later Saxon or earlier Norman architecture, or both, that is recorded in this country, and in which the observations we have just made will be found considerably exemplified†. That church was founded by Canute a little before the conquest; and although some parts evidently bespoke a repair in the style denominated Gothic, yet the west end, or that part

* Newcome's Hist. of St. Alb. p. 95. where specimens of both appear, unquestionably in the time of the Conqueror.

† Dugd. Monast. V. 1. p. 283.

which afforded the entrance, was beyond doubt the work of Norman hands, if not of those which were employed by it's founder. It was low and modest, and had nothing of the height or expanse which appeared in the rest of the building, and which made a part of the plans that afterwards came into vogue. The tower and spire also were perhaps the humblest that ever were erected, and therefore left but little question that they too were of an early date in it's structure. The windows in that western part were singular indeed, and such as seem only to have grown from a combination of systems or ideas; they were wide, and yet very short, and brought up to a point at top; if we can call them terminated in a pointed arch, the whole depth of the window was almost absorbed in making that arch. It may be difficult indeed to say, whether those windows were the production of later Saxon, or earlier Norman builders. The buttresses, however, to that western part at least appear to have been Norman, and of an early period, because they lay more snug to the building, and were less cumbersome, than those which were attached to the parts that carried the Gothic style.

There is another circumstance, in which the Normans seem to have pursued and even extended a practice found among the Saxons both earlier and later, and that is in the sculptures sometimes employed on the capitals of their pillars. In the age of Wilfrid it has been already observed that historical sculptures, and various figures in relief, were wrought on the capitals of the columns at Hexham. It has also been remarked, that in the later age of Alfred the sculptures employed on the capitals of the pillars in St. Peter's at Oxford partook strongly of the emblematic. In the present cathedral at York, constructed by archbishop

Thomas, a Norman, in the age of the Conqueror*, we may see that taste carried to a singular extent, in which the gravity of the sanctuary was sometimes sacrificed to the humour of the times, more solicitous to make out a pun than to shine in the emblematic, even while it was affected to be studied. To specify one instance will be enough; and that shall be the two figures of a monk and a nun, in an horizontal posture, stretching forward their heads towards each other for the purpose of a salute. It would have been too dissolute to have exhibited so much in that place without a corrective lesson, of which perhaps they truly thought that the emblematic was the fittest vehicle. The figure of the woman therefore, beyond the neck, was made to terminate in that of a goose. She told all her sex who might happen to come into the like circumstance, that they were geese for so doing. As to figures in relief, or the heads of men and women, and sometimes of animals, the Normans were never behind the Saxons in the introduction of those as ornaments to their arches; and particularly at the spring of those arches, where they served as corbels or brackets to support what rested upon them; at the same time that they were intended to preserve the memory of founders or benefactors. Examples of that kind are now to be viewed in the door at the west end of the cloister into Ely-cathedral†, and in the arches on the south side of the abbey-church of St. Alban's‡. But those which occur in the cathedral at York seem to have been carried much further than others.

In a short process of time the Normans in England appear to

* Newcome's Hist. of St. Alb. p. 46. † Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 35. pl. 7.

‡ Newcome's Hist. of St. Alb. p. 94.

have gathered another idea as builders, which, if we may venture to trace it, came from Sicily, and from the Saracenic example of the Torre Zizza which has already been mentioned. If we are right in tracing to that source the objects of our present remark, and we know not any other source so likely, it is a strong proof not only that the Normans gathered up every thing which came in their way as builders, but that in building it is very rare to see a new example given, especially by those who have gained a name, which will not be embraced and pursued by others. The circumstances to which we now advert are two. The first is, the singular form of the openings for the windows, long and narrow, with a kind of fretted stone-work at the edge, and rather carried towards a point at the top. The other is, the singular direction of the string or moulding, which did not run horizontally as in all the regular works both of Normans and Saxons, but perpendicularly, dividing as it were the space between each window, and cutting the front into portions. These particular features, wherever they were employed, will give to every building one and the same aspect; and so similar did they appear in some Norman examples here to what was done in the Torre Zizza, that one would have thought the builders of Reading Abbey in A. D. 1121, and of the tower of St. Cross near Winchester in A. D. 1132, had constructed that Sicilian edifice perhaps two centuries before.*

Still the Normans have been spoken of by historians as exhibiting something new in their manner of building†; and we are led particularly to consider some of those novelties as introduced

* See Grose's *Antiq.* Vol. 1. and 2.

† Bentham's *Ely*, V. 1. p. 32, 33.

here under Edward the Confessor, who having been educated in the Norman court was fond of embracing the habits and ideas of that people*, and gave a specimen of what was called their new manner of architecture in the Abbey-church at Westminster, which became a great pattern to subsequent builders†. A like specimen was also given about the same time at St. Peter's in Gloucester, part of which is still remaining. The question is then, what that novelty was?

We shall hardly expect to find it in the detail of parts, as all those parts were generally conducted on what was understood by Normans as well as Saxons to be Roman principles. It is more likely that it should appear in the general scale and formation of the whole building. And in that view we see abundant room to remark the introduction of much novelty in the structures of the Normans, arising from a very essential difference between their manners and ideas and those of the Saxons. The latter, if not always more humble than the former in their general notions, were at least very much lowered in all the parts of their character for some time before the ruin of their state‡. The Normans, on the other hand, although moderate and abstemious in their diet, were fond of pomp and magnificence and expence in every thing else. This difference in their minds produced an equal difference in all the fabrics which rose respectively from their hands. Those of the Saxons, when most elegant and best constructed, were generally of a moderate size, and finished in the space of a very few years; while the works of the

* Ingulph. Hist. p. 62. Ed. Gale.
 Gest. Reg. p. 102.

† Math. Paris. Hist. p. 1. Malmsh. de

‡ Malmsh. ibid.

Normans were large, sumptuous, and magnificent, of great length, and breadth, and height, with two or three ranges of pillars one over another, connected together by various arches, and forming lower and upper porticos. So extensive indeed was their plan, and so great their design, that most people who lived at the time when any of those fabrics were begun hardly ever expected it to be accomplished*, at least in their own age; and, as if the builders were of the same mind, they usually consecrated the church when the east end or choir part was first finished, and left the remainder to be completed as they or their successors should be enabled to do it†.

As far therefore as we can judge at this distance of time, all that was new in the Norman architecture, and different from the Saxon, was in the greater size and expanse of buildings.

Some particular circumstances would naturally grow up with that greater expanse of Norman designs. When the walls were carried up to that greater height, the use of buttresses became more plain, and even of flying buttresses to keep all strong and tight at the top. As these last came into vogue, they created the necessity of little turrets, erected at a proper distance, against which they might bear.

We have observed that it was natural to the Norman character to affect much shew in their buildings. And that shew appeared in many enrichments both on their arches and on

* Godwin de præsul, Angl. p. 175.

† Bentham's Ely, V. 1. p. 33.

parts of their columns, in such style as the progress of the times had sanctioned. A late writer*, who has been led by his history of the cathedral of Ely to investigate with much success the progress of Saxon and Norman architecture, has specified some of those enrichments, which will be found useful to ascertain not only what is Norman, but very often the æra in which a building was constructed. To that author we shall refer the curious reader.

On the whole, whatever advances architecture might make in the hands of the Normans, or however they might approach in any particular circumstances to what has been considered as a part of the style called modern Gothic, there is no reason to look upon them as the authors of that style. In those things which may appear to carry a relation to that style we shall do right to consider them as acting in a desultory manner, to which they were led either by accident or by some convenience of materials, but by nothing that amounted to regular principles or to any new system. Although it be true, that the style denominated modern Gothic came forward in Europe, and became the vogue of building in this country, not long after their conquest of it, yet that is no sufficient proof of its having derived its source from them.

It is much easier, indeed, to say from whom that style did not originate, than to pronounce by whom it was formed. That fact has been hitherto reserved from all research. We seem to be deprived of every evidence that may reach it. If the pointed

* Mr. Bentham.

arch be considered as a primary and ruling feature of that style, and that in conformity to it all the other parts ran upwards to a point, it will either embarrass our views of the subject, or lead us to conclude that the style, of which we are speaking, was made up and matured by an aggregate of circumstances which had been observed in preceding times; for we find the pointed arch in very high and remote antiquity, and in countries widely distant from each other. It is seen in one of the ancient pagodas at Mavalipuram on the coast of Coromandel*, and in an old temple of the Gauls called Montmorillon in the province of Poitou†. Something very near it was done in Egypt, where the external and internal apertures of pyramids were sometimes closed by the gradual projection of the stones one above another till they approached nearly to a point at top‡. It is not impossible that similar reasons might have produced it among the Gauls and in those instances which have already been remarked among the later Saxons in England; but as to the example afforded in Asia, which exhibits it hewn out of a solid rock, the cause which led to it there has not been touched by any, and probably remains involved in deep historical research. So far therefore as concerns the pointed arch, nothing can be more certain than that it was not original in the style denominated Gothic and that it must be considered as a detached circumstance. Still its relation to that style, as a component and associated part, is very distinguished; and the principle on which it was so combined, and the whole became matured, is left for elucidation.

* Dissert. on Hist. and Antiq. of Asia, V. 2. p. 10.

† Anc. Univ. Hist. V. 18. p. 576.

‡ Dalton's Remarks, p. 54.

That principle, it has been thought, and the world has long acquiesced in the idea, was borrowed from the construction or form of a grove. When it is added, that the authors of that style, supposing them to be Goths, or any other pagans converted to Christianity, were led to that source of their scheme because they had been accustomed to worship in groves*, it is assuming as a fact what is the most difficult to be proved in the subject, and as a reason what is perfectly needless; for that scheme of building had not obtained its birth till long after the European world, having become Christian, had known no worship but in temples, and it was just as easy for men under those habits to take an idea from a grove as for those who had been always habituated to its shades. Yet, whether the reference to that source be the true one or not, there is certainly a sublimity arising from that origin, which, if once it was caught by the mind, could not fail to be embraced by every feeling attached to religion in those ages. And thus, on the supposition that such were the real source of the style of which we are speaking, it has been well observed, that a much nobler birth, though a humbler fortune, attended that style than what marked the Grecian or the Roman architecture, which took their principles from the hut or the hovel that had been their habitation or their shelter †.

Proceeding on the reference to the grove as the real source of the scheme denominated Gothic, they who have encouraged that reference have had every advantage in their support. For no attentive observer has ever entered one of those larger and

* See Warburton's note on Pope's Epist. V. 3. Epist. 4.

† Ibid.

more elegant structures, but it represented to his imagination an avenue of trees; nor has he ever viewed one of those regular avenues intermixing their branches over his head, but it put him in mind of a long vista through a Gothic cathedral*. Indeed, when once the resemblance to the grove was decided on as a ruling principle, although the authors of that scheme had much to consider and adjust in scientific practice, yet the very construction and form of many parts in their buildings became decided at the same time, and what would have appeared elsewhere irregular and unnatural was then reasonable, orderly, and harmonious†. For could the arches be otherwise than pointed, where the object was to imitate the curve which is made by the intersection of branches with each other? Or could the columns be otherwise than split into distinct shafts, when they were to represent the stems of a clump of trees? The spreading ramifications of the stone-work in the windows, and the stained glass in the interstices, how novel soever, were naturally employed, the one to resemble branches, and the other the leaves of an opening grove. And the surprising lightness, with which the whole was constructed, varying from that established principle of apparent solidity, which had distinguished the Grecian and Roman architecture, and yet preserving, as it has generally been conceived, a real strength, was inevitable in the completion of a rural place of worship formed on that particular system‡.

An author now living, and in a work now partly published, which is intended to elucidate some rare examples of the Gothic style in Portugal, has suggested another idea of the principle on

* See Warburton's note on Pope's Epist. V. 3. Epist. 4. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

which that style was formed, and may best be solved*. He conceives it to have arisen from the principle of the pyramid, in conformity to which not only the whole structure received a pyramidal tendency, but every vertical part terminated in a point. From thence the pediments were pyramids; the buttresses and turrets were crowned with a smaller pyramid; the niches had a pyramidal canopy; and the porticos, how many soever on the first story, were reduced to one at the top. Thus, the general disposition of the edifice appears to have been regulated by the pyramidal principle, and actually approached to the pyramidal form as nearly, at least, as the ordonnance of an historical painting which is pyramidally grouped.

Looking on the style, of which we are speaking, in this view, we shall come to consider the pointed arch in a new aspect. It will no longer appear to us as a primary and governing circumstance, but as a component part associated with every other from a necessary regard to uniformity. In the system, to which it was attached, it became inevitable, if that system was to be regular. It became inevitable just as much as the shape of the openings employed by the Greeks and Romans was inevitable on their systems of the square or the rotund. Where their structures were quadrangular, the apertures terminated horizontally; where they were round, those apertures had a semi-circular form. And to that principle of uniformity those ancients ever adhered, with very few exceptions indeed, which may have been owing to accident, or some prevailing necessity.

* See Murphy's Introduction to his Plates of the Batalha in Portugal.

That the authors of the Gothic style were equally regardful of that uniformity in the selection of the pointed arch, and that they employed it with a discriminating judgment, is plain, because they sometimes avoided it in buildings whose form or use, admitting the intervention of a different principle, suffered them so to do. Their buildings were never round, and therefore there was no chance of their using the semicircular arch. Sexagons and octagons they had many, which are now seen at Mantua and Parma, and in other parts of Italy, and Sicily also. But where the edifice terminated horizontally, and the aspect of it was horizontal, there the apertures were closed in the horizontal form, of which the refectory of the Batalha, and the convent at Beja, in Portugal, afford very singular and curious examples. It must be observed, that those buildings are not churches, in which the pyramidal principle prevailed with those builders over every other, and in which therefore the exception abovementioned would seem by no means admissible.

For these observations and discoveries we are, in truth, indebted to the author to whose work we have last referred; and therefore we are ready to render him all the credit to which he is justly entitled. On the ground which has been opened by that author, and in which every honour is due to him for the solidity as well as the originality of his remarks, we may revert with some addition to the conclusion which has already been mentioned on another ground, that the Gothic style had a more ancient as well as a more noble birth, though a humbler fortune, than the Grecian and Roman architecture; for the pyramidal principle was the oldest and most revered of all others in the world of art. How far it pervaded that world of art in its first move-

ments, and from what depth of sentiment it's emblematic purposes arose has been occasionally shewn in the preceding volume. Yet, although in it's principle thus viewed the Gothic style was more ancient than every other, in the composition given to that principle by the authors of that style it was unquestionably original. It was conceived in a manner entirely new, and was formed in a manner wholly independent of every known order in the world.

As such, we shall not wonder, although we may regret, that the authors of that style left to the rest of mankind as little access as possible to the real source from whence their scheme arose, and to the ideas on which it was conducted and formed into a whole on every variety of detail. It was conducted as a mystery; it actually obtained that name; and such it has for the most part remained to the present hour. No sooner was it well matured, than it came forth under the conduct of a company or fraternity of builders, who seemed determined by every regulation to keep to themselves, or to those who became initiated into their body, the rules and modes of their proceeding*. That initiation was obtained only upon conditions, of which secrecy was one, and not the least important. To keep that fraternity together, as well as to give it recommendation, the sanction of papal bulls was afforded, conferring exclusive privileges†. Thus they set out, as all others are wont to do, who are in possession of a discovery, which they mean to turn to their own advantage.

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 3. p. 173.

† Wren's Parent; p. 306.

That body, so formed at first, was occasionally strengthened and extended by new disciples* of Italians, Germans, Flemings, and French, besides Greeks, who were sure not to be behind others, where any ingenuity was moving, and who had then almost lost the sense and spirit of their own orders. These were distributed into classes, not only for the facilitating of instruction, but for the better regulation of work: every tenth man was called a warden, and overlooked nine others; while a master in chief superintended the whole. To keep their science together, and not to be invaded by familiarity with others, they dwelt in a camp of huts near the building in which they were engaged†; and they conversed with one another by signs which none but the initiated could perceive or understand‡.

In all these circumstances we see the features of those later free-masons, who were in fact the offspring of this architectural fraternity, although it be only its secrecy which they have retained, and although they may be willing like all other societies to give themselves as high antiquity as they can. They who formed that first fraternity understood human nature well, and what might be secured by a principle of secrecy, when once its solemnity was made a common cause with the passions either of pride or emolument; although there is no principle which human nature, when it has none of those pledges to hold it, and to counteract its curiosity, is more bent to defeat than that of secrecy. Certain it is, that of all the schemes founded on that principle, or taking it into their measures, in the ancient or modern world, none maintained it better, or succeeded better in

* Wren's Parent. p. 306.
Sicilies, V. 3. p. 173.

† Ibid. p. 307.

‡ Swinb. Two

their object, than those fraternities of architects, the first free-masons of the world, as they were called in consequence of their privileges, who left to their successors in name all the encouragements of success, which a perseverance in that principle could promise.

Thus constituted, those fraternities of architects travelled through Europe, building churches by contract in those days of emulous piety, when not only Christian communities were eager to raise their own churches, but individual bishops, as we have already seen in many instances, founded their own cathedrals, and private men out of charity or commutation of penance supplied materials or carriages*. Those contracts they executed on such moderate terms as must have surprized all who have had access to any records in which those contracts are preserved. To them indeed, and to the system on which they were executed, the Christian world is beholden for those places of worship, which, if we are to calculate by the difficulty of keeping them up, or others in their place, in later times, there could have been little prospect of obtaining in any other way. Those architects, and those only, were enabled to carry up those great fabrics at so little cost on their plans of workmanship, which were so easy in the execution, so accommodated to the circumstances and materials of every country, and therefore so much more compatible with common resources than the orders of Greece and Rome†.

Left this should not be immediately apprehended, we must observe, that the architecture pursued by those men was an ingenious compendium of work, very prompt and summary in

* Wren's Parent. p. 307.

† Ibid.

it's process, as far as we are able to conceive it, and particularly suited to these northern climates. Every country produces stone of some kind or other, and whatever were it's kind, it was convenient to their use. They wanted not those quarries which produced larger blocks, because they took not into their plans maffy columns, architraves, and cornices. The stones, which were best fitted for their purpose, were such as might be carried up a ladder by any man on his back, although in cases of necessity they had pullies and spoked wheels*. Therefore they made no account of height; indeed they conceived that to be the mark of magnificence; and as stones of smaller dimensions were easily piled up one above another to any height, they were led by the conveniency of practice, as well as by the consistency of principle, into the pride of pinnacles and steeples. For the same reason, as well as for any other, they used the sharp-headed arch, which rose with little centering, required lighter key-stones and less abutment, and yet would bear another row of doubled arches rising from the key-stones, by the diversifying of which they could raise the most eminent steeples. The same reason also decided the construction of their pillars, which were in fact a bundle of little toruses, divided into more when they came to the roof; and those toruses being split into small ones, and traversing one another, gave occasion to the tracery-work, of which those fraternities were the inventors. In that tracery there was not only ornament but æconomical use, for it served by it's disposition without other materials as mullions to the windows, for the reception of the glass; at the same time the workmanship of it was cheap, and a device known only to themselves, being ge-

* Wren's Parent. p. 307.

nerally performed by flat moulds, in the use of which the wardens could instruct great numbers at once *. The same double purpose of ornament and use was consulted in dressing the angles of pinnacles and pyramidal elevations with the flower called *calceolus*, which not only gave a finishing to those parts, but afforded a means for workmen to ascend on the outside for repairs †.

From various circumstances which have been touched in the foregoing observations it will appear that the style of which we are speaking, and the architects by whom it was conducted, were first found in Italy. Perhaps it might yet be traced to its authors, if reference could be made to the papal bulls by which a sanction was given to the fraternity that first engaged in it. At present however we can only conclude that Italy was the country in which those architects arose. There are testimonies enough that from thence they were brought into England, for the erection of the more celebrated structures in that style, when it came into vogue here. The cathedral at Salisbury, which was the first that obtained the grant of Henry III. and in the first year of his reign, was the work of those architects ‡. And there can be little doubt that some other structures of that kind in other parts of Britain, which will hereafter be mentioned, were indebted to the skill of those architects for their design and execution. We mean not to say, that those men were universally employed. It is not to be questioned that many fabrics in that style, of a less splendid and perfect sort, would be raised in all parts of Europe by builders, who although they had never been

* Wren's Parent. p. 307.
Salisb. p. 5. 8vo. 1719.

† Ibid. p. 302.

‡ Antiq. of

connected with those fraternities, yet had gained by common and gradual observation a general knowledge of their manner, though perhaps not of their system. And from this cause alone it seems to be accounted for, that there is so much diversity in those Gothic structures of one and the same period, and often of the same year, in different places; some of which shall be found extremely plain, others extremely nice and minute, and others again not free from a mixture of that style with the Saxon or Norman. So far, however, as those fraternities were engaged, who first shewed that style, and with whom rested whatever was profound in it's system, we conclude that they came from Italy.

Beyond this we move with great hazard in our attempts to find the authors of that style. That it could only be matured by able and enlightened minds, is most certain: and perhaps the reason why any have conceived it to have been the offspring of Saracenic study, was because it was not easy to find any others in the darker ages equally enlightened with that people, and equally competent to generate such a scheme. At the same time it was certainly material to such an opinion, that it should appear if there were any thing in the Saracenic architecture more than in that of the Eastern empire in it's later days, which could be brought to support that notion. They who have conceived that style to have been a refinement by Christians on Saracenic principles*, have also left the previous conclusion implied, that there were minds sufficiently able and enlightened in the western world to refine upon and mature that scheme. Others therefore, embracing a conclusion which appeared so

* See Wren's Parent. p. 306.

unquestionable, have conceived that in the formation of that style the studies of the clergy were primarily engaged. In support of this idea, as applied to architecture in general, the weight of examples for some centuries was certainly decisive throughout the Western world as well as in England*. And if that idea be admitted as reasonable, if at the same time Italy be admitted as the country which first gave birth to the style denominated modern Gothic, our research becomes greatly narrowed, as we have but to collect from the truth of history the characters or societies which were left sufficiently conspicuous to bear the supposition of having matured a style so new.

It is not that we presume to offer the remark, which we are going to make, as a solution of the difficulty which has hitherto covered the present investigation; but we are authorized to assert, that the only rivals in those ages to the enlightened studies of the Saracens were the Greek monks at Rossano, and in the convent of St. Nicholas near Otranto. Their celebrated school was then in a very flourishing state. They were shining lights in the midst of the darkness around them. As Greeks, they were naturally devoted to the cultivation of elegant science. As monks, they were intent on the building of churches. And we know that geometry and the demonstrative sciences made a part of their studies as well as among the Saracens.

It is for every man, who shall duly weigh all the circumstances which at present appear in the case, to determine within himself, how far it may be reasonable to consider that new scheme of architecture as the result of study among some of those monks.

* Felib. V. 5. p. 167.

If it shall be thought to have been the work of progressive maturity, if there shall be found in it any parts of detail which may be traced back to the Eastern empire, and not only to the great archetype of all eccentricity in the church of St. Sophia, but to some few exemplifications in the church of the Holy Sepulchre as built by Constantine, perhaps there were none so likely as the Greek monks, who were most familiar with those older structures, to contemplate those peculiarities, and to carry them into new systems. The occasion, which opened for that purpose, was inviting, and none were so likely or so able as they to embrace it. The age was universally actuated by the same zeal for building churches; and yet neither the resources nor the materials of all countries were the same. It was not merely the pride of genius that would take advantage of those circumstances, a zeal of devotion must concur to strike out a plan of building, which should not only captivate by its solemnity, but accommodate all by its mode of execution. And who, among the clergy of Italy, but those Greek monks were then equal to such a scheme?

The idea which has been advanced, and perhaps credited for some time, that the style of which we are speaking was the fruit of the Crusades*, and arose from observations which the Crusaders had made in the East, was never solid, because in fact the East afforded no examples of building previous to those crusades, which could become models of that style, or furnish any principle for its execution. Neither is that idea assisted by the earliest evidences of that style, to which we have at present had access,

* Wren's Parent. p. 297, 306.

in Italy; where there are some distinguished structures of that kind, whose epoch treads so close on the first crusade, that they can hardly be supposed to have originated from any Eastern style, which the Crusaders might have encouraged on their return. The mausoleum of Bohemund at Canosa in an octagon form, terminating in a cupola, and adorned very minutely in that style, was built before his death, which happened in A. D. 1111*. Earlier still by some years than that edifice, and perhaps among the earliest of that style in Italy, must have been many of the structures erected by the famous countess Matilda†; for she died in A. D. 1115, and she had been mistress of her own prodigious dominions in that country from the year 1076, long before a crusade was thought of. To name but one of her numerous edifices, the baptistery at Parma, in a hexagon form, and very curious in its execution of the style now before us, was the work of that lady, which could not on many accounts have been raised so near to the close of her own life as the period which saw the death of Bohemund. If that style was introduced by the influence of those Crusaders, that influence must have been very extensive in a short time, when on the banks of the Tweed the noble church of Millrofs, perhaps one of the most delicate and elaborate models, and for aught appears to the contrary at present, the oldest of that style in Britain, was raised by king David and consecrated in A. D. 1145, having been ten years in building‡.

While those sacred edifices arose in the spirit which still remains to be contemplated by us, who shall solve the difficulty

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, V. 2. p. 321. † See her extraordinary history, Bowyer's Popes, V. 5. p. 264, 287, 321, 403. Millot's Mod. Hist. V. 1. p. 268, 269. ‡ Account of Millrofs, p. 8. Kelso, 1782.

which presents itself when in the Two Sicilies, sixty years after the death of Matilda, we find the style of which we have been speaking retrograde in the two cathedrals of Monreale and Palermo; the former of which displayed an equal measure of the Saxon or Norman*, and in the latter is neither delicacy nor lightness†?—when in our own country, but five years earlier than the consecration of Millrofs, the conventual church of Coggeshall in Essex built by king Stephen, and hitherto supposed to have been the oldest example of what is called Gothic in these islands‡, is in the very plainest dress of all those examples, and not strictly uniform in that design.

These are among many other points of investigation, connected with that species of architecture, which can only be developed by laborious and extensive research, but from the elucidation of which the curious would derive considerable gratification. At what period of time that architecture first came forward, and where in Europe with certainty: whether it appeared in it's outset with all that has been conceived to constitute it's nicer and more elaborate execution; and if not, what were the stages of it's progress, and what may be considered as the criterion and the period of it's utmost advancement: these things, in which every country in Europe has much to offer on it's own part, open a very large and interesting field of inquiry, which has never yet been beaten, but which might nevertheless be traversed with much success by those, who would take the pains to traverse those parts of Europe, in which that species of architecture most eminently occurs, to ascertain the spirit of it's design, the

* Swinb. V. 3. p. 335.

† Ibid. p. 301.

‡ See Strut's Man.

and Cust. of Engl. V. 1. p. 103. See there pl. 26. a sketch of those ruins.

æra in which it's various structures arose, and what is to be gathered from their local history. These things, however, enveloped as they are in many difficulties and apparent contradictions, we must leave to others who may not be diverted from those pursuits by more complicated inquiries. The solution of them appears to be in very good hands, if the author to whom we have already referred, and who has penetrated so deeply into the spirit of that style, shall think fit to pursue those inquiries with the same determination which enlightens us so much on the subjects already proposed by him to our attention in Portugal.

Before we conclude this subject, it is proper that we should take notice of two circumstances which have been advanced by respectable authorities to the prejudice of the style, whose principles and progress we have been considering. In the first place it has been urged very strongly, that in the view of perspective and engaging effect, of majesty and grandeur, and also of simplicity and grace, that style falls very short of the examples afforded by the Grecian and Roman orders; that in the perpendicular direction of it's lines and mouldings the best perspective is defeated; that in the multitude of it's angles the sight is broken; that in the busy and fretted nature of it's works the idea of a whole is lost, and all that should be gathered in detail; we know not where to begin or end *.

All these observations may be allowed, and yet, we conceive, the authors of that style would have answered to them, that they did not mean to vie with the Greeks and Romans in the pro-

* Evelyn's Account of Architect, p. 9. Wren's Parent, p. 305.

duction of an exterior perspective, but to rival, and perhaps to outdo them, in the effects of an internal view, where it was necessary that the mind should be impressed by the uses of the building. They might truly say, without disparagement to the Greek and Roman architecture, that when it had produced all the effects of which its external beauties were capable, it had done as much as was generally intended; and they might also advance, without too much pride in their own, that no other style of building was ever calculated, equally with theirs, to excite sublime and awful sensations*. If therefore they fell short of the ancients in the majesty or the grace which addressed the eye without, they filled the mind which contemplated the interior, especially of their churches, with that solemnity which is certainly the first character of those structures. Their objects were different from those of the ancients, as their principles of building were different; but they reached their objects no less effectually than any of those ancients. They reached those objects even in the external view, which although it will not create the sensations arising from the Greek or Roman orders in their finest execution, yet will produce those which were intended to be raised.

The next objection, to which we have adverted, is a more serious one, if it be well founded. It is this, that the Gothic style, affecting great lightness, wants a sufficiency of real strength. Sir Christopher Wren has said, that he had generally found in those structures a deficiency in the poise of the vault of the ailes, and that the weight above was too great for the substruction be-

* Sir W. Chambers on civil Archit. p. 24.

neath, which was enabled to support it's station by being braced on all sides with iron bands, rather than by that substance and form of construction which would have enabled it to rest naturally on it's abutments*.

There is no demurring with confidence to the opinion of that great geometrician, especially when delivered upon facts. It must be allowed, that in the very circumstance of cramping artificially by iron bands there arises to our first ideas a suspicion of consciousness in those architects, that more solidity was needful than the parts had naturally obtained. It may nevertheless be remarked, as to those expedients, that they may have been the precautions of a new principle, which had not obtained the sanction of time to it's geometrical sufficiency. And indeed there was no circumstance of departure from the principles and practice of the ancients which might call for more precaution, than that which professed to avoid apparent strength, while it secured a real one; and which sought to obtain the latter by the use of materials infinitely smaller than the ancients had any notion of employing. As to the facts alledged, which constitute the root of the objection, we can say nothing to those particular instances which were on the mind of Sir Christopher Wren, and on which his remarks were founded. But the admirers of that style have to oppose to the weight of his theory the experience of many ages, of as many indeed, which those structures have survived, as have ordinarily marked the duration of fabrics constructed on any other principle. Let that theory be settled as it may in the studies of architects, the practice has generally proved itself

* Wren's Parent. p. 305.

equal to it's pretensions. That lightness has stood the test of so many centuries, that it may surely now claim the character of strength.

These remarks on the architecture, which succeeded to the fall of the Roman empire, and in some respects came forward with it's decline, and was pursued with some variety by those who successively became distinguished by their dominion in any part of Europe, will close our inquiry into the arts of the ancient world. In following the present subject we have inevitably been carried somewhat into modern ages, and especially in discussing that particular style which is denominated Gothic; but as that is connected in it's investigation with the architecture which had taken place in times considered as ancient, this breach of order will carry it's own vindication in it's necessity. We shall next direct our inquiry to the regeneration and progress of art in the modern world.

PART. III.

THE PROGRESS AND PATRONAGE OF THE FINE ARTS IN THE MODERN WORLD.

CHAP. I.

The remoter causes which led to the revival of the fine arts in Italy—their more immediate revival under Nicholas Pisan, Cimabue, and Taffi—the greater advancements of Giotto—the rise of the Florentine Academy in A. D. 1350—the private school of Franco at Bologna coeval with that of Giotto at Florence, but less successful in it's disciples than that of the latter—the arts not without encouragement in other parts of Italy—the prevailing taste of patronage, and consequently of painting, to the close of the fourteenth century—the revival of architecture traced through all it's steps to it's establishment under Bruneleschi.

IN those dark ages, whose principal light was derived from the scientific Saracens, the fine arts slumbered in the cells of those Greek monks, who could not resist their natural and national impulse to ingenuity, abased as it was, or who perhaps found those arts convenient to their feelings of religion. After having slumbered there so long as they did, incapable of being awakened

by any zeal immediately attached to their own success, they owed their reviviscence to circumstances very remotely connected with the probability of producing it, and beginning to operate full two hundred years before their revival could be marked distinctly.

The Pisans, a commercial people, had long been accustomed to carry on a traffic with Greece, and the coasts of Asia minor. When the crusades took place—a mad and senseless project, to dispossess of the holy land idolaters, who abominated an image—the Saracens, with whom was found what literature and science was then left upon the earth—and to kiss in his footsteps in Palestine that Saviour, whom every Crusader to a man most firmly believed to be present on the altars of his own country: the Pisans were among those who fitted out smaller vessels loaded with provisions, which they sold to the Crusaders on those coasts; wisely determining that it was better to enrich themselves with the money of those adventurers than to take part in their schemes*. Returning from those coasting voyages, both then and long before, they brought with them columns, or fragments of columns, or other fragments of sculptured marble or stone, and many bas-reliefs, which were abundantly to be gathered among the ruins of ancient Greece; perhaps from a curiosity to become possessed of those elegant remains, or meaning to employ them to the best advantage in their own structures, which in the dearth of their own ingenuity might derive some ornament even from those fragments of taste.

* Millot's *Mod. Hist.* V. 1. p. 294.

An occasion presently offered, if it had not been originally in contemplation, which afforded room for the use of all that they had obtained. The foundation of their cathedral was laid in A. D. 1016. By the same means which had put into their hands those pieces of art, they obtained such artists as Greece then afforded for the architecture in which they were going to be engaged. Among those artists they brought to Pisa one Bouchet of Dulychium, who was considered as the most ingenious architect of his time, and who shewed no inconsiderable genius not only in his general plan of that structure, which having five ailes was an arduous undertaking in those days, but in his application of those architectural fragments, which he rendered useful to his design*. One of the epitaphs, for there are three, on his sepulchre in that church shews what Bouchet was as an engineer; for he formed a machine, by means of which ten young women could raise the weight which a thousand pair of oxen could not move, nor hardly a ship could draw through the water:

Quod vix mille boum possent juga juncta movere,
Et quod vix potuit per mare ferre ratis,
Buschetti nifu, quod erat mirabile visu,
Dena puellarum turba levavit onus.

Some of those bass-reliefs are also now to be seen in the church-yard of Pisa.

That work created some attention in the country, which brought some young men to Bouchet as his pupils. By them were built in forty years more the church of St. John at Pisa,

* Vafari, proemio delle vite, p. 73. Edit. Bologn. 4to. 1648.

that of St. Martin at Lucca, and some others. Those several edifices were full of historical sculptures, and of figures in half-relief formed in the marble of the building; and from thence we see clearly what was the extent of art to which those disciples went. It was the Greek manner indeed, but the manner which had been left in the ruin of the Grecian arts, and in the decline of the Eastern empire *. More than that could not be obtained by Italy in any Greek masters then existing, and it would take a long space of time before their scholars, and others in succession, would be able to work out the insipidity conveyed in those remains. The fact is, that no general change began to be made in it till about the latter end of the thirteenth century†.

We must not, however, consider the Tuscans or other Italians as having never attempted for themselves, or been assisted by others to attempt, before the arrival of Bouchet, that Grecian manner of art, which even in its ruins was left venerable by its name. Architecture contributed to keep alive not only for itself, but for the sister-arts, some remains of that Grecian manner, which would probably never have been maintained in any other way‡; and which was carried in a few instances beyond what can easily be accounted for in those periods. Those instances will appear by and by, when we come to speak more particularly of the revival of architecture itself. In one of those edifices, that of St. Miniato at Florence, which was raised in the year 1013, and whose architecture had gained some advantages, Mosaic paintings were introduced into the choir by Greeks§. And in all proba-

* Vafari, proemio, ubi sup.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid. et V. 1. p. 25. Felib. V. 1. p. 96.

bility that work contributed to the sending for Bouchet to Pisa presently afterwards. Yet neither in those Mosaics, nor in any others of that period, nor indeed in any paintings then wrought by Greeks, were seen more than the first and simplest attempts of colouring, with many defects in the design, such as staring eyes, hands open, feet as if they were crippled. Such infirmities as those, by which the features no less than the general figure were rendered monstrous and unnatural, appeared in the works of all those ancient churches, and in that of St. Miniato among the rest, between the door which led to the vestry, and that which opened into the convent*.

From Bouchet and his pupils there issued in less than another century not only other architects, but sculptors and painters, among the Italians. Malvasia says, that from the year 1115 to 1140 Guido, Ventura, and Orson were employed as painters in several churches at Bologna. It is natural to suppose that the Greeks, who were occasionally engaged in Italy at those periods, had taught the Italians their practice of painting, which was generally in fresco and in mosaic. Buono was both architect and sculptor, in both which capacities he made himself known at Ravenna, Naples, and Venice from the year 1150†. In 1174 Oltromontano the architect raised the steeple of the cathedral at Pisa, and Bonano the sculptor executed its brazen gates. In the former of those undertakings the artist did not acquire as much honour as Buono gained from the steeple of St. Mark at Venice, which he founded so well that no defect has since appeared in it‡.

* Vafari, proemio, ubi sup.

† Ibid. V. 1. p. 7, 8.

‡ Ibid.

But the Florentines looked still towards the Greeks; and in the early part of the following century another call was made on those artists to paint the chapel belonging to the Gondi-family in the church of St. Maria Novella*. At the same time the Venetians employed Apollonius and other painters from Greece on Mosaics in the church of St. Mark; from whence that artist was prevailed on to embrace the encouragements held out to him at Florence†. In these last steps the door was more immediately opened to the revival of the arts than in the preceding works, in which there appeared, as we have already mentioned, the rudeness of that Greek manner, which had been so long invincible; unless we except what was executed in some churches of Florence and of Venice from the beginning of the ninth to the beginning of the eleventh century. Yet all those artists, who had been so occasionally engaged in Italy for the space of those two centuries, were Greeks, possessing those remains of elegant art, which the general ravages of many ages had left in their country, and from whose scanty store the European world was destined to draw once more a fertility of improvement, and Italy once more in the first instance.

Tuscany began that honourable career. She had been to original Rome what Egypt was to Greece in the ancient arts. And in their modern revival she became again to the states around her what Sicily was at first to the states of Greece, their leader to the works of taste.

Before the middle of the thirteenth century Nicholas Pisano,

* Felib. V. i. p. 96.

† Vafari, V. i. p. 25.

Cimabue, and Andrew Tafi made their appearance in Tuscany; the first in architecture and sculpture; the second in painting, but not exclusively of architecture; and the last in Mosaic: the first at Pisa, the two latter at Florence. They all came into the world at no great distance of time from each other, Nicholas and Andrew being both older than Cimabue, but the former the oldest of all.

We shall first speak of Andrew Tafi, that we may not be interrupted in the thread of detail, which is less dependant on him than on the others. His passion for Mosaic carried him to Venice, where Apollonius and other Greeks were employed in that way*. The connexion he there formed with that artist, whom he carried from thence to Florence, gave him the opportunity of being improved in the art of enameling, and of making durable plasters. He may therefore be considered as the first Florentine, and indeed the first Italian, who was thoroughly instructed in that art, although when his works came to be compared with those of Giotto after him, then it appeared how much they wanted to be improved†.

Nicholas Pisan had been brought up under some of those Greeks who had been employed in his country. From some natural impulses of genius he seemed not to be well satisfied with their taste. He betook himself to those ancient bas-reliefs, which the Pisans had brought from Greece. He studied them attentively. Although the greater part was seen in fragments, yet some were entire. By their help he found himself possessed

* Vafari, V. I. p. 26.

† Ibid.

of new ideas; from them he gathered such new instruction in design as caused him to dare a little, and to forsake with some freedom the rudeness which had been practised before him. He ventured to break from it: he shewed by his subsequent works, and particularly in his sculptures over one of the gates of St. Martin's church at Lucca, as also in other sculptures at Naples, that he had derived advantages from those studies*. And the examples he gave of advancement beyond those who had gone before him created a new emulation in others, which proved to be equally serviceable to painting, by suggesting the means from whence it's advantages were to be drawn. In him was laid the foundation of a revived architecture and sculpture, which was carried on with encreasing character by his son John, whose disciples Agostino and Agnolo of Sienna brought up those ingenious men that first figured at Florence in the elegant art of carving gold and silver †.

While Nicholas and his son John were so engaged, Cimabue came forward, impelled by a great desire to be a painter. He had been put under the tuition of those Greeks, who came to Florence to paint in the chapel of the Gondi-family ‡. But the emulation derived from Nicholas Pisan had reached him. He wished to get rid of that rudeness which appeared in all the works of the modern Greeks, and he made some progress towards his wishes. The age conceived that he had made a great one; for no greater surprize and joy could have been produced by any work of the pencil in any period than that which was

* Vasari V. i. p. 16. et proemio, ubi sup.
52. 53.

‡ Ibid. p. 2.

† Ibid. V. i. p. 20. 23.

felt at the sight of the Virgin Mary, his first picture, when it was finished for the church of St. Maria Novella. They carried it in processional pomp, with the sound of trumpets, to the place appointed to receive it, and the day was celebrated by a public feast*. Strange as those effects may appear to us, the people were right; for they could only judge of the works of taste through that medium of it to which their eyes had been accustomed; and by that medium they saw charms in the picture of Cimabue, although it rose in fact but few degrees beyond the rudeness which he was so anxious to surpass. But those few degrees were marvellous in those days, when we consider the real state of the arts before him. Vasari, who had beheld some of his works two hundred years after they were executed, could not but wonder how he came to see his way through so much obscurity of art to the progress he had made†. It is no just criterion of that progress, although the contrivance was certainly a poor one, that in the cloister of St. Francis at Pisa he embraced the mode of giving expression to Christ on the cross by making angels to carry certain words from him to the ear of his mother and of St. John‡. Expression was a difficult thing, which Cimabue had never seen, and which of course he was not able to attempt. It was sufficient, if in his designs he could strike out a freer and more easy manner than those who had taught him; if his figures were disposed with more propriety and judgment; if in his draperies he could relinquish the hard and rigid lines which had been established by long practice for want of care or zeal to do better; and if in his colouring he was able to give his

* Vasari, *ibid.* p. 4. Felib. V. 1. p. 97.

† Vasari, *ibid.* p. 3.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 4.

carnations more nature, and in the whole of it to get rid of that flat and meagre manner to which the pencil had been long condemned. These were great advances, let him have gone ever so short a way in each, and although we allow him, as we must, to have retained a considerable imitation of those from whom he had learned his art. And of those advances he left satisfactory testimonies in the church of St. Maria Novella, and in the abbey of the Trinity, at Florence; in the hospital of the Porcellana there; and perhaps, above all, at Ascesi in Umbria, where his emulation was not more marked by his abandoning the Greeks with whom he had been joined, than in the numerous and enlarged subjects of sacred history, which he had the courage to undertake.

We shall readily suppose that the advances made by him, few and limited as they were, pointed out to those who followed him a greater proficiency than he himself attained. And so it proved. For in Giotto he raised a pupil, who not only surpassed his master in whatever had given him an advantage over others, but seemed to have gathered to himself with some improvement whatever had been the progress of art before him in its general branches. It was indeed the general emulation of artists in those times to be painters, sculptors, and architects at once. And thus Giotto shewed that he had not suffered the architecture or sculpture of Nicholas Pisano or of Arnolfo Lapo to escape him, when he founded the tower of St. Mary del fiore at Florence, and when he made those models in rilievo for that tower, which Lorenzo Ghiberti declares that he had seen*. He also

* Vafari, V. I. p. 45, 46.

shewed that he had profited by the Mosaics of Andrew Tafi, when he executed what is called his ship at St. Peter's, so far beyond what Tafi had been able to reach*. As a painter we must view him in a variety of ways exceeding what had been done before him in the modern world. The expression, which had foiled the genius of Cimabue, was respectably atchieved by Giotto; insomuch that in that circumstance, as well as in a greater truth of attitude, he was called by his own age the disciple of nature, and it was said that he was born to give light to the art †.

How anxious he was to succeed in that expression was visible in his first works, when perhaps he overdid what he sought to accomplish, as it has commonly happened in striking out of a beaten and dull track of art into a better: so it seemed in his early picture of the Annunciation in the abbey at Florence, where the Virgin Mary shewed so much fright that she was almost ready to run away; and, again, in the subject of Simeon painted by him in one of the chapels of St. Cross, where the child being presented by the Madona to the good old man clung fast to it's mother, through fear of the stranger ‡. Ample amends, however, were made for that excess in the just affection expressed by Simeon himself. As Giotto went on, that expression became more chastised, as in the thirsty man longing to drink of a fountain, in the upper church of Ascisi §; in the devout submission of St. Francis to the scars, in the lower church of Ascisi, and in that of St. Francis at Pisa ||; in many characters

* Vasari, *ibid.* p. 26, 42.

† *Ibid.* p. 38, 39, 44.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 37, 38.

§ *Ibid.* p. 38, 39.

|| *Ibid.* p. 39, 40.

introduced into his history of Job, in the Campo Santo at Pisa*; in the patience of the man who is fishing with a line, in the Mosaic at St. Peter's†; and perhaps, above all, in the contrast raised between the truth, simplicity, and piety of the innocent wife who is put to her oath, and the distrust and anger of the accusing husband, described in a cloister at Rimini‡.

In all those works it was not merely the expression of particular feelings, in which Giotto was to be commended, and in which he was indeed original: all of them afforded examples of a new success in attitude, of some invention in the use of it, of more liveliness in the heads, of more force in the draperies, with some ease and softness in their folds; and they also gave proofs of an attention to *costume*, which was altogether new§. In one of his paintings, which represented the death of the Virgin Mary with the apostles about her, in a church at Florence, Michael Angelo at the distance of two centuries used to say that nothing could be more natural than the composition of that story||. To Giotto we owe, besides, the first attempts of another advantage in the art, which, however imperfect under his pencil, laid the foundation of all the perfection to which it was afterwards carried, and that is, foreshortening**.

Those improvements, rough as they were in his hands, will appear surprizing when we reflect that for many of them he must have been in a great measure indebted to himself. And yet that he should reach them before others will appear natural, when we

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 39, 40.

† Ibid. p. 42.

‡ Ibid. p. 44.

§ Ibid. p. 38.

|| Ibid. p. 45.

** Ibid. p. 44.

know that he set out very early in the habit of drawing from the life, which we are assured was a novelty to his own age as well as to some others before him*. And in his drawing he had acquired that decision and strength of hand, which left him no competitor: this was evident in the compleat circle drawn by one sweep of his pencil, which told the pope, without any other design, who was the artist that had drawn it†. In short, we are compelled by facts to acknowledge that Giotto opened the door of the art, more than any other man, to those that followed him, and that to him may be traced many great advantages which afterwards distinguished the pencils of others, and in which they have sometimes been considered as original. Enlarging so much as he did, though still leaving room enough for others to enlarge more considerably after him, the circle of his art, he was enabled to raise under his own eye, and in his own house, the first school that was known in modern Italy. And we shall not wonder to find that school leading, by the diffusion of it's instruction, to the establishment of the first regular academy of design which had been founded since the days of ancient Greece, and which was founded in Florence.

That event took place in A. D. 1350. An event so new in the modern world, and so important in it's consequences, must claim our attention. It was devised and formed by an assembly of artists in Florence‡, as the Grecian Academy was formed by an assembly of Platonists at Athens. Ten of those artists gave it a being, which afterwards became the child of government, and was continually fostered by the dukes of Tuscany. Filled

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 37.

† Ibid. p. 41.

‡ Ibid. V. 1. p. 129.

with the importance of their purpose, those members of it fixed their first step in religion. They founded the institution under the auspices of St. Luke. To perpetuate the memory of its consecration, and of the characters concerned in maturing it, Cassentino, one of its members, a pupil of Taddeus Gaddi the pupil of Giotto, brought forward a painting for which a conspicuous station was assigned*. We should naturally expect it to be an historical painting, below which no idea could be offered on such an occasion. But we must remember that the age was yet young in the conceptions of art, although a century had elapsed since the name of it had begun to be understood: it had but passed, in fact, through a few hands which were marked by any promising character. If therefore Cassentino's choice of a subject were at all incongruous or eccentric, he must be excused. His subject was the inside view of the chapel belonging to the academy, on one side of which were ranged the academicians, and on the other their wives, in the middle was St. Luke painting the portrait of the Virgin Mary†.

Of the several characters which rose out of that academy, and with whom the fine arts began to rise into fame, we shall say nothing at present. The epoch, which gave birth to that institution, will sufficiently terminate that general view of the revival of those arts, to which this chapter is confined. It will nevertheless be proper to mention that the stages of their revival within that epoch were not confined only to Tuscany, or to those movements which have already been noticed in Venice.

* Vasari, V. i. p. 129.

† Ibid.

Giving Malvasia credit for those ruder essays in painting at Bologna a century earlier than the appearance of Cimabue at Florence, it is true that, in the same age with Giotto, Marin the sculptor and Franco the painter endeavoured to draw the attention of the Bolognese to their arts. We are told that their taste was rude, as it could not well be otherwise; although they are said to have been commended by Dante, and Franco was employed in the Vatican, as well as Giotto was at St. Peter's, by Pope Benedict XI*. The former was enabled to set up the first private school of design at Bologna, as the latter did at Florence; and the effects of Franco's school were so far similar to those of Giotto's, as it raised up pupils abler than their master. Yet those pupils at Florence appear to have had greatly the advantage over the others at Bologna, at least so far as we know the characters which have been most noticed among the latter. Simon, one of those, chiefly painted crucifixes, and from thence got the name of Simon of the crucifix; and Jacob de Avanzi, another of them, only drew pictures of the Virgin Mary. Yet Michael Angelo and the Carrachi are said to have found in their works something to be praised†. What must Franco their master have been, when he was surpassed by pupils so humble?

On the other hand, among the disciples of Giotto we find the openings of important talents. In Stefano of Florence were seen the first attempts to shew the naked under draperies, and also the first marks of perspective, which he gave in the view of an edifice introduced into one of his pictures, and dis-

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 41. Monier, p. 119.

† Monier, Ibid.

playing not merely his success in the perspective, but a new taste in the proportions and beauty of the architecture which had been unknown to that age*. Laurati of Sienna set the example of design considerably enlarged in its conceptions; his manner was grand, the airs of his heads noble, and his draperies suitable in dignity†. Lorenzetti shewed the way to describe the effects of winds and storms‡. Another disciple, commonly called Giotto, became distinguished by a happy union given to all the parts and circumstances of his figures, however varied in their complexions, their draperies, or other partial colourings§. He promised indeed very great advancements in the art, if a consumptive habit had not put an early period to his existence. And although he was called Giotto from his possessing very strongly the spirit of his master, perhaps the disciple who most eminently possessed that spirit, and displayed the most general abilities of those who came from that school, was Puccio Cappanna, whose works were dispersed through many of the churches and religious houses of Florence, Rimini, Pistoia, and especially of Ascisi, in some of which they are to be seen at this day||.

In other situations besides Florence and Bologna encouragements were not wanting to the arts, although we find no schools in other situations at that time, and hardly any artists who were not drawn from one of those cities. The encouragements, which have been already mentioned as held forth by the popes, will shew how the arts were then received at Rome. And they obtained at that time a very distinguished protection from the

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 58.

† Ibid. p. 62.

‡ Ibid. p. 80.

§ Ibid. p. 107.

|| Ibid. p. 47.

house of Anjou on the throne of Naples; whose patronage, commencing with Nicholas Pisan and Cimabue, and regularly following the arts in their progress, must be considered as one of the first and warmest patronages by which they were assisted in their revival*. It should not be forgotten, that by the time the Florentine academy was established, or soon after, the pencil was carried into Spain by Starnini, who was invited thither from Florence by the reigning monarch, and who found in that patronage the source of wealth at least equal to his professional merit†.

It is natural to enquire, to what objects those encouragements were directed, what was the produce of the arts as connected with the views of instruction, and what of course was the taste of the times, within the period which we have taken, or at most within the space of that century in which the Florentine academy was founded.

The views which are opened to us in this part of the subject are various and mixed. On one hand, we discover as much energy of mind in those who employed the arts as could have been desired in their maturest age by those who possessed them in the highest strength. There was no trifling conception of subject, nor any disposition to trifle with the talents that were offered. A compass was embraced, which might then be considered as difficult indeed to be filled, but in which any tolerable success would be sure to lead to a greater. Early as Giotto appeared, it was his fortune to be called to those exertions. And

* Monier, p. 89—93.

† Vafari, V. 1. p. 138. Felib. V. 1. p. 131.

it was not merely in the Mosaic over the entrance of St. Peter's, which represents "Peter walking on the sea," that those exertions were employed. The subjects of the Apocalypse for his royal patron at Naples were great subjects, in which the undertaking, however executed, was dignified as well as the selection. And that undertaking will not be looked upon with less respect, when we are told that the poet Dante, Giotto's intimate friend, assisted his thoughts in those compositions, if the whole invention of them was not furnished by that ingenious mind*.

On another hand, we find superstition greatly pervading all that the arts produced. The volume of superstition was then opened to every artist, in all Italy as well as at St. Peter's. We trust that we shall never be suspected of intending any disrespect to religion, or to whatever is connected with the most precious religion in the world; nor do we mean to insinuate that, as lessons of art, madonas, legendary saints, and crucifixes may not be worthy of being studied and admired equally with any other subjects fraught with the profoundest lessons of instruction. To instruct they undoubtedly meant, which will not be lost on the thoughtful mind: but when we reflect that those are fancied characters, most certainly so much of their impression as springs from religious reverence is abated; and no other effect is left but that which arises from the execution of art; we come to look on them as general figures placed in their respective situations, and for the sake of the expression and skill which the master has given them. It is true that other effects were intended to be produced, in which superstition found its account.

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 43. Felib. V. 1. p. 107.

But the question before us is, whether the patronage, which exhausted so much art for the uses of superstition, or for the mere uses of art itself, was as valuable as it might have been made. To artists themselves it was indeed of value, as it brought them into vogue, and became an established source of support to their profession. But what should the age have said to it, had those ages been more enlightened? And what should be our opinion now of patronage so conducted? With very few exceptions indeed, every artist to whom we have had occasion to advert was very much employed on madonas, legendary fables, and crucifixes; and every church and monastery throughout Italy was filled over and over again with those subjects by every new master that was worthy to be embraced. If there be nothing more valuable in the pencil than the means it may afford of contemplating fine art, then the employers of artists in those days will claim to themselves the highest ground of patronage, and they did all the service which they were capable of doing in that way to the age around them, and to others that should follow. But the ancients, with all their devotion to fine art, and with all their superstition too, not less inflamed than among moderns, were not of that opinion. And however that opinion may be favoured by professional men, we trust that the advocates of fine art will not be agreed to reduce its importance so low as to pronounce that the patronage, of which we now speak, was in its mode, and in the extent to which that mode was carried, worthy of high encomiums.

So much for the share which superstition had in it. With respect to political views, they had not yet opened their influence on the arts, although they had taken pretty strong root in the

breasts of the popes, by whom the sweets of political power had been enjoyed for eight hundred years from the time of Stephen II. But we must wait till the papal chair is filled by Julius II. and Leo X. before we behold the arts brought into the vortex of those views.

Independent of superstition, we shall find the taste of those times leaning strongly to the dark, the extravagant, and the horrible. Not individuals only, but communities, shewed the prevalence of that spirit. Even where the scripture was followed, that spirit would gain a preference. "Thomas putting his finger into the side of Christ*" was certainly not a subject for refined feelings, if at all for the eyes, and least of all for eyes connected with a heart that is replete with veneration for that divine character. Donatello, a brother artist, thought aright upon that subject, if others did not. Very sensibly did he tell the author of the picture, when it was finished, that then was the time to shut it up for ever.

If the devil were represented in any of his temptations, let St. Ranieri be the favorite individual who baffles him; yet why should that evil spirit be described in all the agitations of chagrin and shame for his defeat, like a thief going to the gallows? And for that work Simon Memmi was brought from Sienna by the Florentines, and the church of St. Maria Novella was honoured with the care of it†.

The rulers of Arezzo were not behind the Florentines in the

* By Paolo Uccello. Vafari, V. 1. p. 183. Felib. V. 1. p. 132.

† Vafari, V. 1. p. 90. Felib. V. 1. p. 112.

same taste, when they invited the pencil of Spinelli to so frightful and extravagant a representation as that which he made of "Lucifer among the fallen angels," under the image of a beast more monstrous than ever assailed the sight, and so full of the horrible, that the painter himself, who was not possessed of the strongest nerves, was ever after haunted by it in his dreams, it deprived him almost of his senses, and it shortened his days *.

The government of Pisa carried that taste as far as it could be urged, when Andrea Orgagna was employed to paint "the universal judgment" in an assemblage of circumstances which might have been supposed impossible to be combined in that subject. There were scenes of frivolity, dissipation, and intrigue, in the midst of which were many little heathen loves fluttering about, and decoying all around : in contrast to those there was a landscape, if we may use the expression, of hermits, anchorites, saints, and monks, intent only on prayer and holy contemplations ; while in either of those groups the eye fixed on one or two conspicuous characters then living at Pisa, who were to be surprized by death, along with their respective groups, and to be carried to heaven or hell. Besides these, the wretched image of death, cloathed in black, with his antiquated scythe, had his place in that work. And, to crown all, because such heaps of bodies as were mowed down by that scythe would be removed with difficulty to their respective places of destination, there were multitudes of angels and devils employed to draw out the souls through the mouths of those bodies, and to carry them, some to heaven, and others into pits of fire which were seen on the top of a mountain †

* Felib. V. i. p. 131. Vafari, V. i. p. 136.
Felib. V. i. p. 113—115.

† Ibid. V. i. p. 100, 101

We are to suppose that work to have been received as the chef-d'œuvre of human genius, when it was called for by the government of Florence to be painted over again in the church of St. Cross, with the difference only of the living individuals who were to be introduced; the pencil being made the instrument of personal spite or flattery to the Florentines, as it had before been employed among the Pisans.

If scripture was made the channel of ideas so incongruous and extravagant, we may be sure that there were no other subjects which were not tinged by their spirit. And therefore we shall not be surprised by the caricature into which "the expulsion of the duke of Athens" was dwindled by the pencil of Giotto, at the instance of the rulers of Florence*. Their minds were satisfied, when they saw the duke and his friends represented contemptible in their persons, and deformed beyond common examples; when they saw them too no less deformed in mind than in body, and those mental deformities depicted by noxious animals entwined round the head of the duke like that of an infernal fury, and by the opprobrious fillet round the heads of the rest, which was worn by those Italians who were convicted of crimes; without one incident to connect those circumstances with the overthrow of those characters in Florence, or to illustrate the patriotic virtue by which they had been overthrown.

Such was the general taste of those times. With the few exceptions which we have mentioned, such were the notions of

* Felib. V. 1. p. 116. Vafari. V. 1. p. 108.

the fine arts, which came down to the fifteenth century. Perhaps we may be allowed to say, it was well that their powers were then no greater, to be configned to purposes so unworthy of their nature.

We have hitherto but slightly noticed, and in no discriminate manner, the share which architecture had in the general revival of the arts. And we have confined our views of that revival, so far as painting and sculpture were concerned, within the compass of the fourteenth century, because the foundation of the Florentine academy in that century gave a new epoch, from which the progress of the arts became more distinct, and more widely diffused, throughout Italy. But when we speak more particularly of architecture, we must carry our views a little further in time, before we can properly announce the revival of those principles and of that spirit which marked its cultivation among the Greeks. It is not the casual and solitary effort of an individual in a dark age, which can be considered as renovating the decayed principles of pure science. Some minds are naturally stronger and more intent on improvement than others; and where such happen in some degree to break through the general obscurity, they only shew that the genuine lights of refined knowledge are not quite extinct, although the age will be little or nothing the better for those fainter glimpses which become the portion of one or two, and are neither attained nor sought by others.

Thus in the year 805, when every thing around was what the Italians called Gothic, the church of the Apostles erected at Florence by Charlemagne, in memory of his visit and his friendship to that city, exhibited marks of design and of study, which

might at that hour have begun the revival of the Grecian architecture, if there had been others to second those attempts, and if the age had been ripe to nourish them. The shafts and capitals of the columns, and all the arches in that church, were executed in much true proportion, and not without some grace. We must infer that Florence had been more fortunate than the rest of the world in retaining the sources from whence those degrees of grace and proportion flowed, and that the edifice of which we now speak was the work of artists in that city, whether they were Tuscans or Greeks, since it is the only example of architecture rising under the directions of Charlemagne which was not in the style denominated Gothic. Brunelleschi, six hundred years afterwards thought that church of the Apostles not unworthy of his attention, and in some respects of his imitation too, when he came to give the model of the churches of the Holy Ghost and of St. Lawrence in the same city*.

Again : two hundred years after the foundation of that church rose up another dedicated to St. Miniato in that city. And there we find architecture struggling to disengage itself from past rudeness, and to imitate in all the parts of the building, and in some instances more happily than in others, the principles of the ancients†. Still those principles were not revived, and that effort passed like the former without any visible or effectual impression on the generation around it.

In the space of two hundred years more the period arrived which produced Cimabue and his contemporaries ; among whom,

* Vafari, proemio, p. 72.

† Ibid. p. 73.

when we speak particularly of architecture we must not forget Marchione of Arezzo, for the sake of a few things that were good among many things bad and capricious: he was in full manhood and employed by Innocent III. before Cimabue was born, and he executed when Cimabue was a boy the marble chapel and sepulchre of Honorius III. in the church of St. Mary the Greater at Rome*. All those cotemporaries, and Cimabue himself†, and his and their pupils‡, seem to have equally emulated all the three branches of the arts as well as a single one; they were architects, or they offered themselves, and were received, as architects as well as painters and sculptors. Yet none of those, who have been hitherto mentioned, have been considered as the revivers of ancient architecture so much as of painting and sculpture.

Among those cotemporaries there was a man, who has been little remembered, but who was one of the first in that age that somewhat improved the spirit of architecture in Italy. He is known to us by the name of *James*, and he was by birth a German, but resided in Florence, where he was employed in the chief works of his time, and among others he built the great convent of St. Francis§. He had a son who became a much greater architect than himself, distinguished by the name of Arnolpho Lapo, his father having received from the Florentines the name of Lapo by way of distinction and respect. That son was at the same time a pupil to his father in architecture, and to Cimabue in other parts of design||. His own genius strength-

* Vafari, V. I. p. 8, 9.

† Monier, p. 89.

‡ Ibid. p. 92, 93.

§ Vafari, V. I. p. 9. Monier, p. 87.

|| Vafari, V. I. p. 10.

ened by his father's precepts raised him to so much eminence in Florence, that besides the church of St. Cross, and other edifices erected by him there, he was selected for the design of the magnificent cathedral of St. Mary del Fiore, which was executed from that design, except as to the cupola, which being left unformed by his death became insuperable by the skill of the best architects that followed him, until after a century and more it came into the hands of Brunelleschi to be finished*. That Arnolfo Lapo then seems to have been the man, who went further than any other in that period towards the revival of ancient architecture, although he must still be considered as adhering very much to the principles on which he had been educated, and which were those of the *Tedeschi* style, or as it is called the old Gothic, of which enough has already been said.

As the affair of that cupola of St. Mary del Fiore is a very important circumstance in the architectural character both of Arnolfo and of Brunelleschi, it will be proper to speak of it more explicitly.

In the design of Arnolfo that cupola was intended to be one of the most stupendous erections of that sort that ever had been beheld, more stupendous far than had ever been exhibited in any of the fabrics of antiquity†. The ancients, says Vafari, never went round a structure so high or so hazardous in its formation as this, which when it was finished seemed to vie with heaven; its immense top resembled nothing less than the lofty mountains around Florence‡. But the peculiarity of its con-

* Vafari, V. I. p. 12, 216. Monier, p. 87, 98.

† Vafari, V. I. p. 217.

‡ Ibid. p. 226.

struction was no less arduous than its extraordinary height and expanse, and was as little exemplified among the ancients as the height to which it was carried. For while it has been already observed that the cupolas of the ancients were low and modest, and kept within the loading of the hemisphere, we know not with certainty that any of them rose from any other than a circular base. The cupola of St. Mary del Fiore was, on the contrary, to rise from the pillars of a square *, which were necessarily found in those plans of Christian churches which were meant to give the form of a cross, and that was indeed in all. In order to raise a circular cupola on those pillars of a square, that square must necessarily be reduced gradually into a circle. And that may be done by means of pendentives, which will easily be conceived by supposing a circle inscribed within a square; that circle, touching the straight line between every pillar, will leave a curvilinear triangle formed by each angular pillar and the two points where the sweep of the circle touches the straight line on either side. That curvilinear triangle is called a pendentive, and advances gradually from its angle at the pillar in a concave direction to receive the circular frame of the cupola. But there was the difficulty, and the labour of geometrical science, to find a new base in that circular line, which in fact had left the pillars, and was drawn in the air.

It must be remarked that Arnolpho Lapo, when he designed that cupola, which depended entirely on the science of construction founded in the accuracy of geometrical knowledge, was himself a perfect master of that science. He had acquired it as

* Vafari, V. I. p. 217.

a regular part of his education from those architects of what is called the old Gothic, who being less intent on the graces of external order were led perhaps from thence, and if not from thence, at least from good sense, to cultivate it in a primary manner, and probably much more than has been done by the generality who have come after them. That science of construction seems to have slept into the place of retiring taste on the division of the Roman empire, if the elevated cupola which we have already noticed on the church of the Holy Sepulchre be the first example, and we believe it was, of one erected on the principles now laid down; and if the construction of that be found in any respect different, then the still more stupendous cupola on the present church of St. Sophia at Constantinople must be considered as the first. And yet it is very extraordinary that the architect, who so ably raised that cupola on the difficult principles we have mentioned, should have shewed so much deficiency of geometrical science in other parts of that edifice, as was evinced by the speedy ruin which befel those parts. Arnolpho Lapo, therefore, must be considered as having before him the construction of that cupola of St. Sophia, if not that of the Holy Sepulchre. But there were others also in Italy, founded on the same principles, and conducted on a similar plan, with that of St. Sophia, which he must have had in his knowledge and contemplation. Those were the cupola of St. Mark at Venice erected in 973, that of the cathedral at Pisa built in 1016, and that of St. Paul at Pistoia raised in 1032. If the architects of those fabrics were Greeks, as we have shewn, brought from the eastern empire, it is plain that the science of construction, especially in the raising of those domes, had been generally studied by them, and there is no wonder either that such works should come from

the hands of those to whom that great example in the east was so familiar, or that Arnolpho Lapo, having been brought up in the same principles, should be able to produce equal or greater works after their examples.

If the science of geometrical construction, comprehensively viewed, was not lost with that architect, and it will presently be seen that at least it was found in Andrew Pisan, yet so far as respects the construction of those cupolas on geometrical principles, and with a simplicity of plan and expence unincumbered by vast quantities of scaffolding, certain it is that no man was found for more than a century, after the death of Arnolpho, firm enough in that part of the science to finish the cupola of St. Mary del Fiore*. It may be inferred from thence that Arnolpho left behind him no model of his intended cupola. When Brunelleschi came forward after the lapse of a century, and was encouraged to compleat that work, there is no doubt that the principles, whatever they were, on which Arnolpho would have acted, were in no degree apprehended then, at least by any Italians. Nor was Brunelleschi himself the man, who was likely to seek after those principles; for his mind was turned entirely to the pursuit of the ancient Greek and Roman architecture, and to the study of that science of construction which grew out of the ancient Greek and Roman principles. It has been already observed, that it is at least doubtful whether those principles were ever exemplified in the construction of a dome founded in the manner of that of St. Mary del Fiore. We may easily conceive, therefore, that no small difficulty was opened here to

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 215.

the new studies of Brunelleschi. He plainly confessed it, and declared that if that cupola were to rise on a round base, no operation would be more easy *. That difficulty was sure to be aggravated by all around him, with whom he might happen to confer; first, by those who might have turned their minds to the ancient architecture, but had not studied it so profoundly as he, and then by those who were habituated to the old Gothic, but were superficial even in that, not having attained it's best science of construction. So unwearied, in fact, were his studies, and his researches into ancient buildings, so various his plans from time to time, for the accomplishment of that object, and so tedious the hesitations upon his plans by the fickle rulers of Florence, not much obviated by their calling an assembly of other architects from other parts of the world, whose opinions only perplexed the subject, that a great length of time elapsed, before he was able to see his way through all those obstructions to the commencement of the undertaking †. It was at last committed to his hands, and was finished by him, not with that departure from the supposed plan of Arnolpho, which had been at first recommended by Brunelleschi ‡; nor very probably in that simplicity of manner, which would have been pursued by Arnolpho himself, but with a great avoidance of that expence which had been a primary object of the government, and also with an avoidance of many absurd schemes which had been proposed by others who had been consulted §.

This short account of what passed in the construction of that dome of St. Mary del Fiore is an important feature in the revival

* Vasari, V. 1. p. 217.

† Ibid. p. 217—224.

‡ Ibid. p. 216.

§ Ibid. p. 218, 219.

of the ancient Greek architecture, as it shews us the ebbings of what is called the old Gothic, and the re-flowing of the more ancient spirit. On the science of geometrical construction, which forms this brief detail, we shall only observe further, that having marked so eminently the professional character of Brunelleschi, and having obtained for him great honours at Florence, it might naturally have been expected to distinguish every architect that came after him. But in that expectation we shall be disappointed. It is astonishing how much the generality, who have studied the principles of the Grecian architecture, have been contented with what is superficial, and have gone no deeper than to become masters of the several orders, and competent to a variety of taste that may be legitimately combined with each. They have studied, in short, to become ingenious designers, but have never thought of being geometricians and good engineers. Yet of the few, in whom the latter character has been eminent, the names are of the first rank in their profession. It is no small argument of the necessity of studying the science of construction, that three of the most celebrated architects, since Brunelleschi, have been most conspicuous in that science, and greatly indebted to it for their fame. These were Michael Angelo in Italy, Sir Christopher Wren in England, and Monsieur Soufflot in France. The first at St. Peter's, the second at St. Paul's, and the last at St. Genevieve's, have given us specimens of cupolas erected on the pillars of a square, and in all the boldness of execution exhibited by Brunelleschi. Since their days we have seen few works in that way worthy of being spoken of. And in England the radical principles of construction have been very much neglected.

Let us now resume the thread of our narrative, by following the general progress of architecture in Italy after the death of Arnolfo Lapo.

Andrew Pisano, most probably the grandson of Nicholas, next took the lead in the architecture of the Florentine republic. The castle of Discarpe was constructed by him, and also the church of St. John at Pistoia. But in this man we see the civil and military engineer. In that capacity his talents were abundantly brought forth by Gualter, Duke of Athens, who was then the governor of Pistoia*. He becomes a further instance to shew us, that in those early days, whatever were the portions of taste in architects, they strove to be founded in the radical principles of their profession: they did not fit down to the study of that profession as a light and superficial science, directed merely to the construction of habitations or even of temples, but as rising on those profound principles of geometrical and mechanical knowledge, which are calculated to give duration to structures however assailed by the elements of nature or the thunders of war.

These men had all finished their career on the theatre of arts before the Florentine academy was formed. Then came Brunelleschi out of that academy in the early part of the fifteenth century. Whether others before him had been at the pains to seek the advantages of studying the remains of ancient architecture in Rome or in the provinces, is not very clear, nor have we much idea that they did, because Brunelleschi is spoken of as

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 66, 67. Monier, p. 93.

singularly happy in having taken that method of compleating himself in his profession *. Having enlarged his mind by those studies, he began to see more clearly the principles of the Grecian orders, and he brought them more decidedly into use at Florence than they had ever been before. Yet we are to consider him as capable of being improved by many additions of knowledge and of the true Grecian taste to those which he had obtained. He did not study as extensively as Alberti who came next after him, nor did he travel as much for that study as Bramante and some other architects in the next age. The palace Pitti at Florence was his own design and execution, and in that edifice we shall as fairly view him, and the progress he had made, as in any other. When we consider that as one of the first works which accompanied the revival of the arts, it cannot be improper to give a short sketch of it, as it were the sketch of that epoch.

The grand front is merely a rustic, without any columns or pilasters. The cortile is a rustic basement, with columns; and on three sides the first floor is an order over the basement, which has a terrace over it on the fourth side. In the middle is a very magnificent fountain. The ground rising behind the fountain is a garden: and the part immediately next the palace is a large open theatre formed in marble and evergreens. In the inside, the staircases and state apartments are grand, and not in a bad taste.

Making a general observation on that edifice, we should say,

* Vafari, V. I. p. 215, 216. Monier. p. 98.

that very probably the influence of his country, which had a heavy order of its own, and some influence derived from his favourite study of the Pantheon, might feed his partiality for those rustics, and for that general plainness and strength, which gives to the first view the idea of a prison more than of a palace. And although where an order is introduced, it obtains by no means its best advantages, yet we see a close attention to the simplicity of order; and in the arrangement both of the internal apartments, and of the external parts immediately adjoining to the building, it seems to have given the great standard of taste to all the modern palaces of Italy, while we must allow that the majesty of architecture agreeable to the spirit of the building has been closely attended to in the whole, and even in the diffusion of its regularity through the environs of the edifice. Undoubtedly it was looked upon by the age in which it rose as a beautiful and extraordinary piece of architecture, and it must be considered by us as a very respectable one, certainly the most respectable that had appeared for many ages.

With the improvements introduced by Brunelleschi the revival of the Grecian architecture may be considered as established, and therefore our present inquiry into that revival will be satisfied without going beyond his æra. What was done in that way in other parts of Italy within the same period is not material to our research, for in this instance as in every other Florence then took the lead. It is true, there was an academy of architecture instituted at Milan by Micheline, as early as the appearance of Brunelleschi; but that academy must not be spoken of for any advancements in the art; for when Leonardo da Vinci came there an hundred years after its foundation, he had to make the

body of which it then consisted, sensible of the rude principles which they had still to shake off*. As to those who came forward at Verona, and at Rome, or even at Florence, in another generation or two after Brunelleschi, they gave extension to that which had been revived under him, and therefore the notice of them will be found in their respective situations.

* Monier, p. 114.

FLORENCE.

CHAP. II.

The Florentine academy conducive to the quick progress made in the arts after that institution—with an exception of colouring—perspective opened by Paolo Uccello—painting carried from it's first to it's second age, or youth, by Masaccio—it's further maturity, and that of the arts in general, forwarded by many eminent sculptors as well as painters immediately after Masaccio—the universal liberality as well as zeal of professors in the pursuit of art a powerful means of raising it to maturity—the third age or manhood of painting established by Leonardo da Vinci—sculpture pushed to great perfection in the engraving on medals and coins—the art and profession of the goldsmith in high repute at Florence, and the means of forming the first great sculptors—the practice of engraving on plates derived from the same source, and first discovered at Florence—how far the vigour of art was kept up by others, cotemporaries with Leonardo da Vinci, or coming after him—Michael Angelo Buonaroti—the meridian of arts at Florence gradually obscured after him, and by what causes—the spirit and progress of patronage in Florence, and how far it was affected by public or private events, till it lost it's celebrity.

RESUMING our view of the arts in Florence with the fifteenth century, we shall see more extensively the beneficial effects of

it's academy in the progress of encreasing talents. For it is unquestionable that those talents must have risen on the advantages of study afforded in that institution, when in a very short compass of time, compared with what had elapsed between the first revivers of arts in the modern world and the establishment of that academy, we find characters advancing in the execution of art so much beyond those who had gone before them. And yet we must look on that academy as labouring for a great while under all the imperfections of an age still infantine in the arts, perhaps under many imperfections arising from it's own contracted influence, until it came to feel the more energetic countenance and support of the government.

It was about the commencement of the fifteenth century, or rather before, that any artists appeared worthy of being mentioned for their colouring. That branch of execution was little seen in the early progress of the Florentine school, and indeed it never distinguished much the Florentine spirit of art. It appeared, however, for the first time intelligently cultivated in Lippo, whose attachment to the art raised him to a respectable profession of it, although he took it up late in life and died in A. D. 1415. We should naturally suppose that Cassentino, who was selected out of all the artists that formed the academy for the consecration-picture, was one of the ablest among them as a painter. But what must have been the colouring of his pencil, when in that circumstance he was said to be inferior to Spinelli, a cotemporary? and what the colouring of that period, when Spinelli's best proofs of it were not fit to be mentioned with those of Lippo, half a century later? Yet this man must be spoken of as green in the practice. The utmost we can say of

him is, that he shewed a more regular intelligence in it than those who had gone before him.

If he understood better than his predecessors the handling of colours, the same period, or one but a little later, was distinguished by another artist, Paolo Uccello, who carried further than any others before him the practice of perspective. The improvements, which have been given to that theory in modern times, certainly opened with that artist. In those disciples of Giotto, who have been mentioned as shewing any sort of attention to it, or in any others before Uccello, it could only be considered as a more correct manner of drawing the appearances of objects from their several distances by the judgment of the eye without any certain rule. Uccello, who had made perspective the more immediate study of his art, had the credit of advancing first into those rules, in which he was followed with more mathematical precision in the following century by Andrea Mantegna, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Julio Romano and others. Not that those great artists carried the science to all the improvements which later times have afforded. For want of a sufficient knowledge of optics and mathematics, the rules to which they reduced it were rather confined in their extent, not sufficiently adapted to general cases, and both laborious and somewhat inconvenient in their practice. And for a long time afterwards, when this theory had made an established part of every treatise on mathematics, it was left subject to the mistake of endeavouring to facilitate the practice founded at first on too narrow principles, rather than to enlarge it's foundation. If many yet mistake it, or do not pursue it on the best principles, the age in which we are now writing has nothing further to re-

quire in addition to the clearness which has been given to the system. And we are to look back to Uccello as the first modern who laid its foundation. Yet we are not to consider him as always firm and sure in what he had so laid down; for it is remarkable that in one part of his history of Noah in the cloisters of St. Maria Novella he had committed a great error in his perspective, by making more vanishing points of view than one in the same scene*. It is plain that the rules he attained were the result of his own persevering practice†. They must therefore have been subject to many imperfections. He was the first man, however, who shewed to the moderns the way of forming a vanishing point‡.

When we are reviewing the more eminent characters which marked those earlier periods of modern art, we meet with some who appear like the common ancestors of families, from whom have branched out the various lines of talents which rose up in succeeding epochs. Among those characters we might mention Pietro della Francesca the Florentine, whose pencil was chiefly devoted to night-pieces and battles, but whose spirit of design had formed disciples that left a great influence behind them. One of those, Lucas Signorelli, became a source of invention from which the great Michael Angelo drew advantages, in whose Day of Judgment many thoughts and figures were borrowed from a painting of Lucas at Orvietto§. Indeed the latter appears to have been one of the first that engaged with ability in the great subjects of Revelation.

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 181.

† Ibid. p. 179.

‡ Ibid.

§ Felib. V. 1. p. 194.

But we must come at once to the great and primary character in modern art. Masaccio, who gave to painting what has been commonly called its second age, or youth. That appellation, which has been given by general consent to the epoch in which he appeared, bespeaks the imbecillity of the preceding age, and the growing strength communicated by him to the arts, yet waiting for greater strength to be supplied by those who should follow him. How he came by the powers which he reached is not distinctly understood. That he had a master we know, Masolino by name, under whose pencil he had seen not only the first happy attempts at light and shade, but the human figure advancing in more dignity, in dress better disposed, and in a somewhat better expression of character than had been given to it by his predecessors *. Not but that expression had been gathering strength from the very days of Giotto, and especially from the two Gaddi his disciples, whose first emulation were those touches of expression. Nevertheless Masaccio's capacities are not all to be traced up to any masters existing before him. It seems most reasonable to conclude that by the native strength of his own mind he darted forth into powers beyond what former instructions could give him, and that the originality of his character was its strongest feature. That originality was seen in the ease and freedom, and also in the relief, which he gave to his compositions, in the nature and force and action which he gave to his figures, with the advantage of a greater power in foreshortening†. In this last circumstance he left behind him the advances of Uccello, considerable as they had been; and of this the proofs were many and curious in the churches and monasteries of Flo-

* Vafari, V. I. p. 197. Felib. V. I. p. 132.
ibid. p. 206.

† Ibid. p. 133. Vafari,

rence, as well as in some private mansions*. In a word, he carried the external character far beyond the expression which had before been given to it. He was, in fact, the first man who opened the doors to that expression which has distinguished modern art †.

Nor did he stop at that external character, without looking into the mind, and pursuing those traits of individual passion, which had been more faintly attempted before him, and were afterwards carried to their best height by Leonardo da Vinci. Masaccio's heads are inferior perhaps to those of no other artist whatever. In all the works of those who came after him their obligations to him are conspicuous. And great must have been the powers of his mind to have reached the improvements which they might claim in the compass of a life that was unhappily cut off in its twenty-sixth year, and so early as 1443. The great display of this artist's abilities was made in the chapel of Brancacci at Florence. There all the great masters that came soon after him resorted to gather those excellencies, by which they severally became distinguished ‡. And there of course we are led to many of those advances, by which the pencil was reared into the next estate of manhood established by Leonardo da Vinci.

There were, however, many other advances in the general compass of the arts, immediately following the period of Masaccio, which led very much to that manhood of the pencil, and contributed indeed to mature the manhood of the whole. Many

* See Vafari, V. 1. p. 206, 207. † Ibid. p. 206, 209. ‡ Ibid. p. 209.

considerable artists, sculptors as well as painters, appeared before Leonardo da Vinci, or flourished in his younger days, who gave great extension to the compass and powers of design, and in fact brought up those eminent men who shone on the théâtre of the arts, both at Florence and at Rome, in the following century. These, therefore, and the advantages that flowed from them, will demand our attention in this place.

Andrea Verrochio was the master of Leonardo da Vinci. And although in his outset as an artist nature did not afford the most favourable appearances of success*, although too the superiority of the disciple was the cause of Andrea's throwing the pencil for ever from his hands†, yet by great and persevering study he became deservedly eminent, and especially for his expression in sculpture, of which sufficient proofs were given in his brazen figures of "Thomas feeling the side of Christ," for the oratory of St. Michael at Florence‡. In Dominico Ghirlandaio we see the man whose instructions formed Michael Angelo Buonaroti, and who was qualified by the spirit and judgment with which his designs were conceived to become the master of such a disciple; those powers were shewn at an earlier period in the life of St. Francis at Florence, and afterwards in the chapel of the Vatican at Rome, whither he was called by Sixtus IV§. To Leon Battista Alberti the arts of design were first indebted in the modern world for very excellent treatises; although his studies, and his extensive architectural practice, prevented him from leaving behind him many works in painting||. Benozzo had a rarity and grandeur of invention, if he was not always most correct in the

* Vasari, V. i. p. 385.

† Ibid. p. 388.

‡ Ibid. p. 387.

§ Ibid. p. 362, 363.

|| Ibid. p. 276.

design of his figures, which became a copious source of study to others in those numerous subjects, comprizing all the greater events of the Old Testament, which he painted in the Campo Santo at Pisa*. Benedetto de Maiano is not to be contemplated merely in the class of ingenuity, which he first professed, and which originated indeed in his own period, although he was the most accomplished master of it, and that was, in the carving of wood, and particularly in the working of Mosaic in that material, by the combination of various pieces stained with different colours, which when put together formed figures, perspective views, foliages, and all other fanciful objects†: neither were his talents to be measured by his taste and skill, which was very great in the execution of ornaments on works of marble, and to which he was always called: his figure of St. John over the gate of the state-house at Florence, his bass-reliefs in marble expressing the history of St. Savinus on the tomb of that saint, and the figures in the history of St. Francis wrought on the curious marble pulpit in the church of St. Cross, shewed that he had risen to considerable eminence in the first branches of sculpture, and that his talent in design was valuable‡. The two Pollaiuoli were men of very extraordinary gifts both in sculpture and painting, and to them the arts of design were indebted for a more correct skill in displaying the naked frame than any former masters had attained; they extended that skill to the precision of anatomical knowledge, which they were curious to investigate, and which was first displayed in their works§. It is sufficient to mention the distinguished subjects wrought in silver on the altar

* Vasari, V. I. p. 313.
382, 384.

† Ibid. p. 380.

‡ Ibid. p. 381,

§ Ibid. p. 373.

of St. John* ; and the paintings of Hercules and Antæus in the palace of the Medici†.

But there are still other characters of the first account in that early extension and maturity of the arts. Ghiberto gathered his own laurels, and saw them blooming round his head almost all the years of his professional life. To say nothing of other great designs, his name is immortalized by his brazen gates of St. John, which Michael Angelo pronounced worthy to be the gates of Paradise‡. Donato, or, as he was often called, Donatello, was not so fortunate, any more than five other competitors, as to have his designs for those gates equally approved with those of Ghiberto. Yet it was allowed by the assembly which sat upon the whole, and which was composed of painters, sculptors, and goldsmiths eminent in their several professions, to the number of thirty-four, that the compositions offered by Donato were conceived in a grand style of design §. His approach to the air of the ancients was strongly marked from his early days||. And besides many other figures, which gave celebrity to his character for that ancient air and execution in various edifices at Florence, his statue of St. George in armour, which is so nervously spoken of by Vafari, and so largely described and commended by Bochi, for the wonderful spirit of martial expression in the head, and the incomparably fine vivacity of action in the whole, beyond any thing which had been sent forth by any hands from modern marble, must be allowed a miracle of modern art**. Of Brunelleschi, as a sculptor, there was not much less to be said than of his abili-

* Vafari, V. i. p. 371.

§ Ibid. p. 186.

† Ibid. p. 373.

|| Ibid. p. 235.

‡ Ibid. p. 193.

** Ibid. p. 237, 238.

ties as an architect. It was no small honour to him, that he was one of the seven selected to compose designs for the stupendous gates of St. John: that honour was not diminished, when his judges having inspected those designs would have associated him with Ghiberto in that work: and it became compleat in the issue, when although he declined to act as second to any man, he shewed himself the great character by his consummate liberality, cherishing Ghiberto and his work and his friendship with the same warmth which he had ever shewn towards him before*. The words of Vasari are very strong on that point, and are given as a cogent lesson to cotemporary artists in every age; “*felici spiriti, che mentre giovavano l’uno all’ altro, godevano nel lodare le fatiche altrui!*” How happy, if his next words had never been found true beyond his own days? “*Quanto infelici sono hora i nostri, che mentre che nuocono, non sfogati, crepano d’invidia nel mordere altrui?*” Bruneleschi had worked his way to those advances in sculpture and design through all the stages of the goldsmith’s art, infomuch that he was thought very soon to have gone beyond any of the old masters in that mystery †. And he left behind him several disciples, who became famous in works of bronze ‡.

One cannot help pausing here to indulge a reflexion on that happy state of things in Florence at the time when those great men lived, so favourable to the maturity of the fine arts, and as conspicuously manifested in that single circumstance of forming those brazen gates as in a thousand other things. In the midst of as much professional zeal as can be supposed in any coun-

* Vasari, V. 1. p. 215.

† Ibid. p. 212.

‡ Ibid. p. 234.

try, when some of the first characters in art were called to the painful task of measuring abilities with each other, where only one could be successful, and all had much to lose in the issue; they came forward not from vanity, nor with an ill spirit of contention, nor with the secret desire of rising on the ruins of each other, but with the honorable ambition of carrying their art as high as it would go in the purpose before them, and of giving celebrity to their country, whoever might be the man that should become the best instrument of that celebrity.

A council is selected to sit upon those works, composed of professional and enlightened men who were considered most capable of judging, and most likely to judge with candour and fairness. Every thing that could be expected from them was done: they deliberated as men who felt the honour of the country committed to them; they judged as men who felt themselves responsible for the integrity of the event; they judged as men who conceived that they themselves should be judged of to eternity: they weighed dispassionately the merits of every production; they discriminated as precisely as possible the various gradations of professional talent in each; and they decided in favour of the artist, to whose work every public and private consideration appeared to demand that the preference should be given. As Vasari beautifully expresses it, “in their decision was manifested that firmness of virtue, and “that soundness of judgment, which as to themselves was divested “of every thing selfish, and, as to the candidates before them, of “every thing personally envious; even to the unsuccessful and “also to the public it was the pure goodness of friendship*.”

† Vasari, V. i. p. 215.

It must be recollected, that the men who acted so magnanimously and justly were themselves professional characters, and yet there were thirty-four such men to be then found in Florence or its neighbourhood.

They who did not succeed were just as magnanimous on their part. They acquiesced with satisfaction in the decision; they bore no grudge to the fortunate candidate; nor did they wish to lessen the pre-eminence which the decision had given him. That decision indeed gave a new and important turn to the fortunes of Brunelleschi and Donato, but without affecting the generosity of their minds; it gave that important turn especially to the plans of Brunelleschi, in which every subsequent age has never ceased to be interested; for it sent those men immediately to Rome upon new studies, Donato to become a better sculptor, and Brunelleschi to become the restorer of the Grecian architecture, and the first of that profession in the age, since he saw that in sculpture he could only fill a secondary place *.

In so amiable a state of things, and among characters so exalted in their movements, shall we wonder that the elegant arts were so soon extended, and rose in so short a period to their manhood? Let the lesson taught in that event be attended to, wherever those arts have obtained an interest. So it was that they were first raised in the modern world, and so must they first be raised in every country. Let every academy instituted for their cultivation, and the individual artists that compose it, always bear in contemplation the conduct of those honourable professors at Florence, who were incapable of any little passions, where the

* Vasari, V. I. p. 215.

honour of art was concerned, and who considered it as the first dignity to their own characters to do justice to every effort of human genius by which their country might be exalted. If once a different spirit prevails, if the voice of any such institution once comes to be the organ of cabal, of personal jealousy, and of discouragement to those efforts which in its system it was formed to cherish, every fatal consequence to the fine arts may be prognosticated, they cannot thrive, they cannot stand long, they must perish, in that country. In other circumstances they might go on and flourish for a length of time, floating at large, buoyed up by their own intrinsic influence, and encreasing their vortex by their own natural attraction: but if once there arises a set of men, constituting a sanhedrim of art, or such a number as to influence its councils, in whose minds there is not at least as much elegance and ingenuoufness as we should expect to find in their works, and in whose measures therefore enlarged and liberal principles are stifled by the narrow views of personal favour and prejudice, the fate of the arts is sealed, even beyond the resistance of any patronage; indeed none will be found to resist it, because when those who stand at the head of art are become contemptible in the administration of that very function, no respect can be left for art itself.

We shall now return to the narrative, from whence these observations arose. The advances made in the arts of design by all those eminent men, who have been named, were accomplished within thirty years of professional life, and before the close of that age in which Masaccio died, for none of them lived to see the sixteenth century. With some of them Leonardo da Vinci was a younger cotemporary, and on their improvements,

as well as on his own wonderful genius, he rose undoubtedly to the character which has universally been given to him of having established the third age or manhood of the pencil. The state of manhood rises quickly on the heels of youth; and so it proved in the elegant arts as well as in the steps of nature, when we consider the short period which elapsed between the death of Masaccio and the vigour of Da Vinci.

It may be asked, what were those specific advantages which were wanted to constitute the manhood of the pencil, and which of course distinguished that of Leonardo? For when we review the characters which have gone before us, we find them so firm in their strength as to embrace both in their sculptures and paintings all the parts of nature, and the most enlarged subjects of civil and religious history; we find in their general works that they were capable of designing, and of better colouring too as they advanced in time; we see that they understood composition, and manifested in many instances great powers of invention; we are struck by the advances which they made in foreshortning, and perspective; and we are charmed with that expression, without which every thing else is puerile, and which having been first emulated by Giotto became the most precious distinction of Masaccio's art. What was there beyond these for Leonardo to give?

If to those professional talents he had only added a life and spirit, and at the same time an ease which hid the appearance of labour, undoubtedly he had given to the arts a more elevated and more manly character. And those advantages he gave; but he also gave many more. Besides a variety of perfections, by

which he became dignified as an artist, and which will presently appear, he carried on to completion that point of professional talent in which Masaccio stood highest, and which still wanted to be more completely embraced. The expression of Masaccio was the expression of character: it spoke a soul: it drew forth an inward mind on the outward countenance. Yet that expression was rather of a general kind, and was capable of great extension in the variety with which it might be adapted to individual character.

The nature and progress of things is ever the same in similar situations. Such was the expression, which we have already shewed in the ancient arts of that very country, when the Etruscan sculpture attained the first epoch of its advancement beyond a primitive rudeness: it bespoke a sentiment, it gave a character which might be contemplated, but it was not so discriminated as to become the index of one particular passion more than of another, or to decide the head of Jupiter or Minerva, so that with the aid of different types it should not besit Diana or Apollo.

That more refined and extended expression of character, by which the soul was specifically brought out upon the figure, and the figure was specifically appropriated to the soul, was the result of Da Vinci's genius. It was the natural result of a mind formed to philosophic investigation, and deeply attentive to all the meanders by which the human passions become discriminated in the human countenance and frame. These he traced to their sources, he found them in their radical principles; and consequently when he expressed them, they appeared in all their pro-

per nature and force ; he never failed to give them every touch that was their due ; yet regarding, like a great master of science, their more sublime and essential appearances rather than their minuter traces.

For these peculiar and precious accomplishments of his pencil he was fitted by those profound acquirements of scientific learning, especially as connected with the theory of design, in which he has never been approached by any other artists whom we are able to name. The sources from which he drew have hardly ever been tasted by others, certainly not in the same copious measure. The testimonies of his studies, which have been published to the world, are still the standards of truth in design ; and the ages after him have to lament many other treatises on art which have perished with time, and some which are locked up by private individuals from the benefit of the public. He hardly left indeed any part of nature or science unexplored, which could be serviceable to his profession. His anatomic skill is known to all ; and the observations which he had made on physiognomy will appear just and profound to those who consider how deeply he had studied the human character. Of mathematics, and particularly of geometry and optics, he was a perfect master : we shall therefore have great confidence in his knowledge of proportions, and in the method which he took of measuring the human body, as it is related in a manuscript left by Rubens. In the circle of arts he was not unpractised in sculpture, and he left behind him very honourable testimonies that the science of architect and of the civil engineer was equally full in his comprehension.

With a mind so abundantly matured, with a vein of genius so

variously enriched, and with a judgment no less solidly endowed, we shall not wonder that the pencil was reserved to be raised by Da Vinci to its manhood. He gave it that manhood in every proper sense of the word. While every latent trait of the human heart was brought forth by his masterly hand, and in all the vigour that was consistent with the most perfect truth of decorum, he added dignity to that truth. Rising on the principles which his studies had realized to his imagination, he elevated heroes, from human he created divine characters, from what was seen he set the mind at work for that which was not disclosed. His designs, in all his greater compositions which have been handed down to us, were conceived in an exalted taste. Like the Greeks, he attached his contemplations to the selection of ideal beauty, so that although his mind was formed in fact upon nature, it was not the ordinary effects of nature that came from his pencil. If ever he became faulty, it was when he strove to make his figures or other objects too perfect, in which case they sometimes became unnatural*. How strongly his mind was impressed by exalted conceptions, which did not always take account of the capacities of art to follow them, was conspicuous in his "Last Supper" at Milan, when he came to execute the figure of Christ. All the powers of the pencil seemed incapable of reaching the ideas which he had formed of that divine character, and therefore he left it to further contemplation, in consequence of which it was left unfinished, the wars of Milan breaking out before he could make up his mind upon the subject. Every other character participating of humanity had been within the easy compass of his expression; but for that

* Felib. V. i. p. 190, 191.

which was then before him he had none which was not to be drawn from long and deep deliberations, or he questioned if there was any in his art.

While we are speaking of the manhood which he gave to the pencil, we must remark that he must not be considered as a great colourist. There was great force in his execution, faint as the colouring was ; and even the Venetians Giorgione and Titian derived from him that force to the advantage of their finer system of colours. The Florentines were not intent on the study of these, and Leonardo in particular stood upon other grounds for the effects of his compositions. He was regardless therefore if his carnations had more of a lees-colour than became real flesh and blood, or if his figures so coloured appeared more as if they were seen in twilight than in the clearness of day. And yet in the employment of the colours before him he was not sparing of his labour, for he sometimes finished his figures so much that they bore as it were the polish of marble*. Neither was there wanting a high relief and an original sort of roundness in his figures, which was much assisted by the strength with which his contours were marked, and by the deep black, too deep as some have thought, which he threw into his shades, but which united with the other parts of his design demonstrated his intimate acquaintance with the theory of lights and shadows†. Giorgione, having seen the management and effect of his colouring, took a lesson from thence, which laid the foundation of his own subsequent character as a colourist, and of the example which he gave to the Venetian school‡.

* Felib. V. 1. p. 190, 191.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 198, 200.

We have just mentioned his "Last Supper" in the refectory of the Dominicans at Milan, which was an exemplification of all that we have advanced concerning him. That valuable relic of his pencil is now, we understand, no longer to be seen in any portion of its genuine remains. It has been sacrificed to ignorance and obstinacy, before it had been materially decayed by time, and when it was possible to have given preservation to the parts that might need it, without losing the original work. Mr. Barry, the present professor of painting in the Royal Academy at London, has told the world in a letter written from Milan, when he was on his travels twenty years ago, that he found an ordinary painter employed by orders of the prime minister of the country, to colour it over anew; and that all his remonstrances to the fathers of the convent for the preservation of the original was ineffectual: they seemed to be either insensible of the loss which they were going to sustain, or too pusillanimous to interfere with the orders which had been given. The picture was consequently new painted as it is now seen, and the beauties of Leonardo's pencil are gone for ever.

Before we go on to the progress of the arts after that great master, or in his later days, it will be proper to take notice in this place of some admirable exertions, by which the compass of the arts was enlarged and refined, in the engraving on medals and stones, because those exertions appeared so early as the fifteenth century, within which our views have hitherto been confined. And that what we have to say of those particular exertions, and of others connected with them, may not be interrupted, we shall follow them at once as far as their general progress may

lead us, although some part of that progress may be connected with other situations besides that of Florence.

How long these might have flourished there before the time of pope Martin V. we cannot precisely say, nor is it very material to look for their infantine appearances; it is enough that in his time they were advanced to much eminence; and he died in A. D. 1431 *. It might have been noticed under the mention of Ghiberto, that in those branches of sculpture, as well as in its higher talents, his fame received a considerable addition †. But Pisanello stood peculiarly exalted on that ground, more especially by those excellent medals which recorded the great council held at Florence with the Greeks, and which were so much caressed by pope Jovius in his letter to Cosmo de Medicis ‡. Before the end of the fifteenth century that exquisite taste became so perfected, that Michael Angelo, beholding a medal of pope Paul III. by Luigi Anichini, on the reverse of which the artist had represented “ Alexander the great at Jerusalem throwing himself at the feet of the high priest”, exclaimed with rapture, that in his judgment it was impossible to carry the art farther §. That was an early period to be marked with so much perfection, when we consider how short a time had elapsed since the first revival of the arts in Tuscany, and how much shorter still had been the time since an academy had been seen in the country, to collect the genius of art, to shape its progress, and to mature its growth.

There is no doubt that the general talent of engraving was

* Felib. V. 2. p. 126.

† Vafari, V. 1. p. 185.

‡ Felib. V. 1. p. 151.

§ Ibid. V. 2. p. 130 131.

created by the revival of painting and sculpture *, from whence it naturally grew as being supplied by them with those images or models, without which it never could venture safely or largely in its hazardous execution. When the elegance of design was brought before the general eye, the temptation was fixed; the man who was not ambitious either of painting a picture, or of cutting or casting a statue, but was attracted more to the engraver's skill, saw the moment and the means arrived for giving scope and assurance to his favourite pursuit. Not the medallist only, but the engraver on precious stones, was encouraged by that revived elegance of design to display its beauties in his own way, to confer a fame on his own particular talent, although it were often grounded on the fame acquired by the designs of others, and to bring back into celebrity those branches of art, which had once stood so high among the ancients in their best days of design, but till now had been lost in a manner to observation †.

However great had been the encouragements by which those particular talents had been maintained in Florence, their emulation was unquestionably pushed very high by the great Lorenzo de Medicis, who amidst his other patronages distinguished those powers of elegant art with his very abundant munificence. The treasures of taste, with which they enabled him to fill his cabinets, were extensive and precious; and these were accumulated not only by the artists of his own country, but by all that were most celebrated for those works among strangers, whom he brought to Florence. Among those strangers, who first were signalized

* Felib. V. 2. p. 125, 126.

† Ibid. p. 126.

by his encouragement, in the graving of stones, were John del' Corgnuiole, and Dominic de Camei from Milan *. Others afterwards succeeded more eminent than the first; and others, again, after those in further gradations of eminence. In the following century the fruits of those encouragements and exertions, so liberally dispensed and excited by the great Lorenzo, appeared at Rome under Leo X. and Clement VII. who were still of the same Medici-family, although acting in another meridian, and yet not altogether in another than Florence.

The medals engraved by Carradoffo, particularly those of Julius II. and Leo X. on the reverse of which is most excellently represented the design of St. Peter's by Bramante, are in established fame. Under the latter of those popes came forward Peter Maria da Pescia, and Micheline, engravers on stones, who contributed to render more facile and practicable those works of genius so difficult in themselves, and so rarely understood †. But under Clement VII. they seem to have been carried to as much execution as can well be imagined. John da Castel a native of Bologna was competent to embrace in the small compass of a single precious stone the greater compositions of history, as "the rape of the Sabines," "naval combats," "the taking of Goulette," the war of Tunis," and many enlarged subjects from the designs of Michael Angelo and others ‡. Valerio Vincencino, who was happy in imitating the elegancies of the ancients, although he was not so excellent in original design as in the execution of his engraving, gave the whole history of our Savi-

* Felib. V. 2. p. 127.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 128.

our's passion on a casket of chrystal ; which was only one among many other works equally curious from his hand*.

A-kin to those elegant works, and growing from the revived elegance of design, there was another branch of art which was much cherished in Florence, and lay at the foundation of much of that ingenuity which arose there in the fifteenth century, or gave at least a considerable direction to it's course. Most of her leading artists in that age were originally goldsmiths. Ghiberto, Brunelleschi, and perhaps Donatello, but certainly Verrocchio, Maso Finiguerra, Gherlandaio, Andrea del Sarto, and early in the following century Benevento Cellini, all came forward from the goldsmith's shop. Connecting with the first skill of their education the elegance of design, of which they were all masters, the age around them might naturally expect from their hands in high perfection the power of bas-relief on gold or other metals, by chasing or engraving. And that power was, in fact, exhibited by them all, unless Andrea del Sarto be excepted as confining himself afterwards to the pencil. The first and most excellent works in that way came from their hands. Was ever that excellence higher than in Cellini? At the mention of his name every lover of elegance is arrested in a pause. On that name hangs a volume to record the compass of it's celebrity. It has filled a volume. And to make others as able as himself, he wrote a volume on his favourite art. At this day the eye of taste is delighted with those works of his hands, which are presented to the curious stranger in the old palace at Florence. The immense treasures indeed which are there col-

* Felib. V. 2. p. 129.

lected in that species of art are beyond all common idea. The wealth of the Cofinos and Lorenzos, whose patronage called forth that taste, was alone competent to make those treasures their own. And it is pleasing to know, that the plans originally formed by that patronage for the cherishing those branches of genius have not ceased to this day. The extensive range of offices and apartments for carrying on those curious works, which form a considerable court or square adjoining to the old palace, are still devoted to the same employments. There the goldsmith, the medallist, the worker on gems and precious stones, the engraver of every kind, the enameler, the elegant mechanic, feel the benefits of an establishment which flowed, no doubt, at first from the private wealth and munificence of the Medici, though now perhaps, and ever since they have become sovereigns of Tuscany, it may be kept up by the revenues of the state. The participation, which the founders of that family had with Venice in the old trade of India, gave them the easy means of acquiring those precious metals, and precious stones and gems, which were the ground-work of so much curious art, and, which probably induced the cultivation of it in those branches with so much warmth.

But we have not yet seen the extent of engraving at Florence. Perhaps the most considerable branch of it, and that to which the name of *engraving* has generally been appropriated in later times, remains yet to be noticed. We advert here to that peculiar art by which the designs of any masters may be taken off and represented with great effect upon plates, which may be used again and again for multiplying those works, and dispersing them through the world for ages. The first means or thoughts

of this discovery were furnished by Maso Finiguerra, a Florentine goldsmith, in the fifteenth century : and the steps which led to it were these. * He had been accustomed to take off in an earthen mould, for the purpose of enameling, an impression of the figures which he had engraved on silver. He then had recourse to melted brimstone, by means of which he took off again those figures ; and when they were rubbed over with oil and lamp-black, they appeared distinct and expressive as those which he had wrought on plate. From thence his mind suggested to him that those figures might be taken off on paper, by wetting it, and running a roller closely and smoothly over ; in which he succeeded so well, that the figures were not only impressed on the paper, but seemed to be actually drawn and designed as with a pen.

Baccio Baldini, another goldsmith of Florence, soon got hold of that discovery, which Finiguerra by no means wished to conceal from the world ; and he is said to have improved it, but that should rather be understood by giving it the advantage of being employed on better designs, which were furnished to Baldini by Sandro Boticelli, than by any actual extension given to the discovery itself. After a while Andrew Mantegna afforded it a new celebrity, by making it the means of multiplying and dispersing the works of his own pencil. From thence it got to Antwerp, where it was employed by Martin on his own designs, and in the next instance by Albert Durer, whose higher character as a designer brought the art still more into request, and who presently set the example of working those engravings on wood.

* Felib. V. 2. p. 132—135.

These productions of Flemish ingenuity found their way to Florence, where in the curious revolution of things they created a new ambition to imitate them in the place which had first created the art itself. They reached also to Venice, where the same ambition was emulated, with this further extension to the art, that Marc Anthonio there took up the engraving on copper with no less force and expression than had been displayed by Albert on wood. That Anthonio was the man who afterwards became so useful to Raphael at Rome by his engravings, which dispersed through the world the exalted works of that great artist. He also laid the foundation of a school, whose effects have been universally disseminated, and from whence disciples in that art have never since been wanted in any country, where arts have been.

Let us now go back to the contemplation of that manhood in art, which was established under Leonardo da Vinci. Manhood is never so fixed as to be incapable of progress. The human body advances in strength, and the human mind particularly in the strength and enlargement of judgment, long after both have arrived to the powers which manliness bestows. And so the manhood, which was reached by the pencil in the period of which we have spoken, was still capable of further advantages beyond even that extent and firmness of growth which the comprehensive powers of Leonardo had given it. Those advantages will easily be discerned, when we reflect how important a feature in the art is style, not only of colouring, but of design and composition, and when we come to consider what Michael Angelo and Raphael, to name no others, produced in those last respects. Fra Bartolomeo, who profited more indeed by the

study of Leonardo's works than in the school of his own master, has nevertheless been considered to have advanced some steps particularly in colouring, which at least engaged the attention, and influenced the pencil, of Raphael *. There were others in the same age, who, if they did not add to the extent of art displayed by Leonardo, or if they were beholden to his works for any excellencies of their own, shewed that the manhood of art was extended, and that its extension was anxiously cherished at Florence.

Sandro Boticelli was reared up in that school, and became immortalized in the church of St. Maria Novella by his adoration of the Magi—a wonderful work, says Vafari, and so fine in colouring, in design, and composition, that every artist is struck with astonishment †. We do not agree with Boticelli, that he added to the dignity of his subject by giving the portraits of three of the Medici for the Magi. That practice certainly lowers our feelings, when we know it, and takes off from the interest with which we would meet the subject; it tends therefore to sink the historic, and to confound it with a class of art inferior to itself.

Andrea del Sarto had his peculiar talents, which were greatly esteemed, inasmuch that in the popular factions at Florence his pictures were saved, when hardly any thing else was spared. It is true, that although he endeavoured to form himself on the works of Leonardo da Vinci, his natural constitution got the better of his studies, and there was wanting in his pictures that life

* Felib. V. 1. p. 203.

† Vafari, V. 1. p. 377.

and animation which was wanting to his own frame. Nevertheless his design was correct and chaste, though simple, and making no pretensions to a grandeur of style. His invention was agreeable, his composition lively, and above all his colouring was inexpressibly sweet. His characters wanted neither nature nor grace of expression suitable to their respective circumstances, and had those been seen in more variety, there would have been little more to require beyond what he possessed, in a style which took simplicity for its guide*.

Pontormo studied under Leonardo da Vinci, and afterwards under Andrea del Sarto, and Michael Angelo seeing his first works pronounced that he would raise painting to the skies. Nevertheless we shall but just mention him, because his caprice and diffidence overset all his merits. It was not the fault of Florence that he did not come nearer to answer that early prediction. He stands a proof of her continued liberality to the exercise of an art, which if not impeded by natural constitution must have been raised by her encouragements to every distinction. His slighter paintings for the Carnival seem to have agreed best with his disposition, and as they peculiarly gratified the taste of the Florentines, they set him upon his best ground†.

Balthazzar Peruzzi was still more eminent in scenical decorations, in which he must be considered indeed as original, and the admired leader of all in that species of elegance, at the same time he was hardly second to any of that period as a civil and military architect. Although he was perhaps more employed at

* Felib. V. 1. p. 267, 268, 278.

† Ibid. V. 2. p. 229—237.

Rome than in Tuscany, yet he sent forth many disciples in his native country, who figured in a greater compass of the pencil than himself*.

Daniel da Volterra, however discouraged for a time by nature, yet rose by application to an eminence among the artists of Florence. There he received that education, which became the source of all the fame he afterwards acquired, as a painter, by his pieces in the church of Trinity on the mount at Rome, and by his sculptures in which he was no less eminent†.

We must be content with a more general mention of others, who felt the encouragements of that theatre of arts, and contributed in their turn to maintain its vigour. Francesco Salviati, and Georgio Vafari, both disciples of Andrea del Sarto, rose into considerable character, both of them by the ease, and freedom, and gracefulness of their invention and execution, though not in grander compositions, and the latter by the power of his pen as well as of his pencil‡. Rosso wanted only to have moderated the licentiousness of his fancy by judgment and attention to the rules of art, in order to have been perfect in all the parts of painting§. Civoli, who had also formed himself under Andrea del Sarto, had his private school in Florence, and owed to that situation the best advantages of his professional ¶character. Passignani somewhat later in time was at the head of another private school there, which brought up many able men, and among others Ludovico Carrache||. Frederic Zuccherò, and

* Felib. V. 1. p. 260—263.

† Ibid. V. 2. p. 250—258.

‡ Ibid. p. 248.

§ Ibid. p. 108, 109.

|| Abrege de la vie, V. 1. p. 26. and 234.

John de Udine, though neither of them natives of Tuscany, were called to Florence to enjoy it's encouragements. Strada the Fleming was in a manner domesticated with the Medici, and Tempesta the Florentine was brought up under him. At the same time Tiberro Calcagni, who compleated many designs in sculpture left unfinished by Michael Angelo, and John Bologna a native of Douay, kept up in a high degree the reputation of that particular art, in which the latter especially gave to Florence during the many years of his residence there, as well as to other places, illustrious proofs of his skill.

From this summary account we may discover the extensive influence of Leonardo da Vinci's genius, and how much his works contributed to form those who came after him for a considerable time, when hardly an artist arose who was not guided by the study of those works, or of others which had been formed upon them. Michael Angelo Buonaroti, thirty years younger than Leonardo, and surviving him more than forty years, undoubtedly divided with him the honour of that extensive influence. Of those artists who have been mentioned some were rather later in time than Michael Angelo, and some avowedly made up their minds by the study of his works; but we conceived it best to bring them together in one view to the close of the sixteenth century, that what we have to say on Michael Angelo, who fills an important part of that period, might stand alone and uninterrupted.

We must consider Michael Angelo as a Florentine artist, notwithstanding any engagements he had at Rome. At Florence he received his education; there was his principal theatre of

action ; there he presided over the school which was brought under the immediate establishment of Lorenzo de Medicis, and within the gardens of his palace ; and when he was called to paint in the chapel of the Vatican at Rome, it was from the artists of his native country that he sought those whom he wished to assist him.

Full of the importance of design, especially in the human figure, and seeing to what advantages it had been raised by the philosophic mind of Leonardo da Vinci, it became his ambition to carry that point of art to it's ultimate perfection, and to infuse into it the spirit of poetic conception. There was room for him to indulge that ambition. It was an honourable aim so to become a new father of his art in it's genuine foundation, in that capacity to which all others must be subordinate in the hands of the painter.

We insist, and with great reason, on the importance of composition, and of treating a subject with the best effect of the truth that is due to it. We speak of perspective as indispensable ; and even colouring has it's enchantments, and the management of lights and shadows. Yet all those powers are nothing compared with the value of design, on which they must subsist for their effects, and without which all their advantages are lost. Neither are they of necessity acquired with so much preparatory science as is needful to constitute a great designer. To make a subject intelligible and expressive in it's composition, is very much a part of speculative reflexion. How many men have succeeded very well in perspective, with no other rule or study than that which is afforded by the eye, and assisted by the practice only of

a short time? And as to the natural expression of tints, and the disposition of lights and shadows, it is a province of the art which we often see very successfully executed by those who can make no pretensions to science. Not such is the skill of design, wherever it is fine and masterly. Is there any substitute for that science, or is that science superficial and easily gained, which marks with exactness and just proportion all the parts of the human frame, and traces the bones, the muscles, and the veins? which gives to the body a due equilibrium, that keeps it upright on its centre? which exhibits in the arms, in the legs, and in other parts, more or less exertion, according to the degree of action appropriated to the character? which expresses upon the countenance all the variety of inclinations and passions? which disposes of draperies, and all other circumstances that make a part of grand composition, with that symmetry and art which we admire in the works of the first masters? which is capable, in short, of realizing and embodying to the eye, in a beautiful and correct expression, the images which the mind has conceived? In these things consist the powers of design, and he who is possessed of them must occupy the first character in art, since without them a picture must ever be imperfect.

But in this view of design we are to carry along with us a two-fold division, into which it may be discriminated. The first relates to what is properly called the mechanical part, and consists in its being just and correct. No man before or since Michael Angelo could make better pretensions to perfection in this part of design than he. Leonardo da Vinci was most beautifully correct, and Michael Angelo had all that correctness before him: but it was a different correctness from that which,

distinguished the latter, and it left to the design of the latter sufficient room to be original. Equally masters of the anatomical structure of the human figure, those two men made a very different use of that particular science. The former chose rather to raise the imagination by giving strength to the more essential parts, than to fill the eye with the more minute ; while the latter, especially in his sculptures which afforded a greater opportunity, chose that the eye should not fail to see that structure in it's minutest force. For this purpose he gave every feature, limb, and gesture so full and so strong, that while they could not be censured as unjust, yet every drawing that aimed at elegance, or stopped at correctness, in the human figure, appeared, when compared with his designs, as if it did not belong to the same subject. In that system we see undoubtedly the powers of a great master, full of rare and curious science. And if it has been said, that by those means he loaded and overcharged his designs, and made them too severe ; it should be considered that he did no more than illustrate, as far as he could outwardly do, that profound and severe truth pervading the human frame, and urged in the sacred pages, that it is " fearfully and wonderfully " made". His extensive genius could not be confined to a common scale : his observations were too enlarged and too masculine to view the human body or the human character, unless in their greatest force : perhaps that severity, as it is called, was somewhat congenial with his own disposition : he did not seek the beautiful or the graceful like Raphael, but the grand like himself alone : on the whole, we see in his peculiarities what could not have been seen but from the hands of uncommon greatness, and what became in his hands the absolute banishment of all that was little out of the regions of Italian art. If in his expression there were

some things extravagant or heavy, yet every thing was always great, and sometimes there was no deficiency in beauty.

But it is not by his correctness in the mechanical part of design, how great and singular soever that species of correctness was, that Michael Angelo must be weighed; we must view him in it's other division, which is no less properly called the poetical part, and to his excellence in which the mechanical correctness we have mentioned seems to have been well suited, as it gave the foundation of that grandeur in outline which is so essential to the poetic province. In this latter view of his talents in design we see him rising from the eye to the mind, from the address which engages the senses to the instruction which seizes on the imagination. This is indeed the divine exercise of the art, which rises above all that is common, and leaves behind it all that is tame or simply correct. It opens to the sublime, and carries us into new regions of intellectual entertainment. It gives wings to the mind, and creates new excursions of thought with every excursion of it's own fancy. It stimulates lessons, which never can rise from any use of art that is less daring. It gives to exalted characters that majesty, which historic truth can never reach; and by the grandeur which it throws into every air, and attitude, and action, it raises conceptions of characters which can spring from no other source.

From his accomplishments in both those parts of design, but especially from the latter, arose his style—that style, which in propriety of speech, may seem first to have deserved the name. We know not that we can regularly speak of a style before that

which arose from his hands. In that style he obtained the appellation of being the Homer of his art.

Indeed the parallel in poetic style and genius between Homer and him is singularly conspicuous. That of Homer, we mean in the *Iliad*, is both original and unequalled in the grandeur of all its parts, in the boldness of its figures, in the sublimity of its expression, and still more in the amazing sublimity of thought, and magnificence of conception: it gives us ideas of gods, demi-gods, and heroes which no writer had ever afforded before; we see them great beyond all that can appear of greatness in human characters; and those characters merely human he has painted in those traits of excellence beyond which human cannot go: it is a style, which is not only full of sentiment, but full of spirit, and full of action, of action equally supported throughout.

And so the style of painting created by Michael Angelo was original and unequalled in the loftiness of its fancy, in the force and boldness of its expression, and in the grandeur given to all its characters: it is full of spirit, and full of action throughout, as well as full of lesson: and till he shewed the way, mankind had no notion that there was a capacity in art to reach the boldness of figures, and to realize the grandeur of character, peculiar to the divine father of poetry.

Analogous to the genius and style of that immortal poet, we see the works of Michael Angelo evincing him the divine father of modern art in the *Capella Sistina*; where, as if he intended to rival the Jupiter, the demi-gods, and heroes of the Grecian bard, and to shew that he who drew his ideas from revealed truth.

drew at least from an equal source of grandeur with him who represented fabled deities loaded by their very priests with human infirmities, he has given to our view the supreme Being, and the figures of sibyls and prophets, who are considered to come as it were between men and angels; and these latter characters he has figured, no less than Homer himself has done in the greatest of his characters, as of another nature; great beyond all that can appear of greatness in creatures, majestic above the resemblance of mortals. He who has ever felt his conceptions raised and animated by the sublimest passages of the Grecian poem, cannot possibly derive less exalted sensations from the contemplation of those Roman works, and from another which must be added to them, we mean, his statue of the great lawgiver and leader of the Jews.

It would not be doing justice to the author of those works to pass by his "last judgment" in the same chapel, a later work designed at the suggestion of Clement VII. and executed under Paul III. and which constitutes so eminent an illustration of the poetic genius and style of that great master. Suffice it to say, that if he did not himself chuse that subject, at least he formed the composition of it in such a manner as became the hardest to success, inasmuch as it laid him under the necessity of exhibiting the naked human body in all imaginable variety, in all the most difficult attitudes, and agitated by the strongest feelings and passions. If the composition be wonderful, the invention is not less astonishing. In no one subject of the Iliad was variety every more distinguished, and perhaps the subject allotted to the artist might naturally threaten as much sameness as any of the battles described by the poet. Yet in in the former we see, as well as in

the latter, the fund of variety inexhaustible. In the more prominent views, on which the eye is first fixed, you might imagine that he had introduced you to all that is great and all that can be terrible: and you will retain that opinion till you come to another; but as you go on, you will find every where new food for admiration; you will find from the top to the bottom, and from the first scene to the last, every one becoming not only varied in it's incidents, but rising in it's importance, and augmented in the terror of it's description.

If there were captious bigots at that time, who censured the nakedness of his figures when exhibited in a place of worship, it was enough to answer, that if the subject were proper, the representation was inevitable; for how, or why, should mankind be cloathed in the resurrection? If they, or others after them, have found fault with the indecency of many attitudes; the reply is fair, that those attitudes were the result of peculiar feelings, which must be supposed to agitate individuals, or they were the means of describing peculiar characters. If in those circumstances there were, in truth, too much capriciousness of idea, that may be a reason for greater caution in the study of that work, but it leaves the author, and it proves him still, the great and profound master. If it has been said, that he neglected the beauty of colours, the aid of ornaments, the nicety of drapery, and other minuter things, and that he deviated frequently from the rules of perspective; let it be remembered, that the great object of his study was the profound science of his art, and that the sublime will ever preclude the precision, the coldness, and minuteness of critical observation.

When those works were produced, they were the fruits of that high degree of original genius, which enabled their author, when a youth, and when, as Vafari declares, he had never chipped a block, nor handled a chissel, to rival the antique in a laughing fatyr. We must not say that he had not profited by the regular gradation of improvements before him. The fact is, he appeared in the most favourable moment of time for carrying his art to it's highest grandeur, when so much had been done towards it's maturity, and particularly by Leonardo, in whom was wanting so little more than he really possessed towards the perfection of art.

At the same time it does not depreciate the genius of Michael Angelo, if he had seen any thing worthy of being adopted, either in the figures or outline of his own "day of judgment", from those which had distinguished that subject in the hands of Signorelli*. The mind was never yet created, to which something would not attach from surrounding improvements, if it's study were to improve. In fact, those attachments do but awaken it to greater vigour, where the mind is possessed of vigour at all, and to trials of it's own original strength. That original strength is the summit and the glory of every character. There can be no great artist without it. When once it becomes vigorous, the art will burst forth as it did in Michael Angelo, in it's most exalted powers, while it's subordinate attainments, more tamely emulated, will be left to move through long stages of time to their best advantage.

* Vafari, V. I. p. 431.

It must be acknowledged, that after all the advances which had been gradually made by his predecessors, and by Leonardo da Vinci more than others, in the high philosophic spirit of art, no examples had been given of the grandeur of style which Michael Angelo had reached, nor had any man ever thought of carrying the art into the regions of poetry.

When he was no more, not only the rank which he had given to painting and sculpture gradually declined, but the whole meridian of arts in Florence changed its aspect, and became no longer what it had been when he was born. Other artists followed him in continual succession, some of those were his disciples, and his works were the study of those who could not have him for their master. But there was neither another Michael Angelo, nor another Da Vinci, to be seen there. The causes of that change were many.

It might have been thought that a luminary so brilliant as Michael Angelo would have thrown, for some time at least, an encreasing light and life around the meridian in which he shone. But it frequently happens that genius of an extraordinary quality diffuses and leaves after it encreasing shade, instead of light and life. And so the greatness of Michael Angelo overshadowed, no less than it illumined, the sphere in which he acted. The superior style of art, by which he was distinguished, was carried by him to the highest possible perfection. Nothing therefore was left for others to do in that style but to imitate and follow it, "*haud passibus æquis*"—a condition, under which great minds would reel, and ordinary minds would sink in despair.

With respect to sculpture, it was by no means on a rising ground, when Michael Angelo was a disciple of Ghirlandaio*. At that time there were few young men, except Michael Angelo, who had been remarked for promising talents in that branch of art. As to painting, it stood on a higher ground†; for besides Ghirlandaio, who was considered as a great master‡, Da Vinci was then in his meridian. But the means of supporting and perpetuating both seem greatly to have drooped. The academy, or society of artists, as it was in fact, although protected by the leaders of the country, and particularly by the Medici, wanted to be invigorated by greater strength, and a more durable support, than it's own members could bestow; and that was to be done either by an improvement on it's own plan, or in a new and more effectual institution. For some time Lorenzo de Medicis had projected the design of forming that more effectual institution; and with that view, as well as to appoint a necessary keeper of his antiquities deposited over the piazza of St. Mark, and within his own gardens, he had retained Bertoldus a sculptor, and a disciple of Donato, who, although he was unable by reason of his age to do much in his profession, became eligible by his character to answer the present purposes of Lorenzo§. Circumstances presently threw Michael Angelo in his way, and especially after he had conversed with Ghirlandaio on the subject of his scheme. He had the opportunity of seeing on various occasions the astonishing proofs of original, and, as he conceived, of inspired genius in that young man||; he determined therefore to take him under his own protection, and to place him at the head

* Vafari, V. 3. p. 137.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 136.

§ Ibid. p. 137, 138.

|| Ibid.

of "the academy of design," which has been already mentioned, and which was thenceforth established in his gardens, and maintained at his own expence. That institution he formed in a most regular manner, and filled it with those students who were most promising in genius. He encouraged their studies with salaries and pensions suitable to each*. He did every thing which could come from the most munificent patronage for the establishment and perpetuation of an institution formed upon the noblest plan. And we may be sure it would be embraced by all who were desirous of gaining the first instruction in art, and ambitious of the first protection and first honours in it's progress. The academicians belonging to that institution, to the time when Vafari wrote his lives, may be known by consulting the last volume of that author's work.

Michael Angelo was as intent upon his trust† as the illustrious founder had been in forming that establishment. And there was every prospect of a revived vigour in the arts, and of an æra in which the powers of design would have been diffused in new celebrity under that great master, when all those hopes were dashed by new troubles which disturbed Florence, and particularly the house of Medici. Those troubles interrupted grievously the flourishing progress of that academy, not only in the first instance, when through the imprudent conduct of Peter, the son of Lorenzo, the Medici were driven for a time from Florence, but afterwards when the like event took place on the success of Bourbon's army at Rome under Clement VII. and again when Michael Angelo was wrested from Florence to attend the com-

* Vafari, V. 3. p. 138.

† Ibid.

mands of the pope last mentioned, and of Paul III. which engaged him to paint in the chapels of the Vatican, and to superintend the building of St. Peter's for the rest of his life. Those circumstances, in fact, deprived that academy of the continued advantages which it was intended to derive from the man who was placed at its head; and the progress of art became confined to the best means which could be employed without him; although the munificence of that family never ceased to carry on the purposes of the founder.

But we must extend our views to another circumstance. Rome, which as a theatre of art had only been second to Florence, began then to rise to a new and primary distinction. The energies of a few popes from the beginning of the fifteenth century had gradually led to that distinction; those of Julius II. and of Leo X. had strengthened and enlarged it; the possession of many antiques recently discovered had made her the seat of new studies; some works of Michael Angelo had increased the general attractions of that meridian; and the pencil of Raphael gave a new character to her school, which fixed it ever after on a new and distinct ground. Thus, she who had been in fact a satellite to Florence, became herself the ruling planet, leaving Florence subordinate to her superior brightness. To that rising meridian all those Florentines or Tuscans had begun to repair, who felt more strongly the impulse of ambition; and if their names are recorded by any works performed in their native country, they were merely engaged as strangers there, in the dearth of native abilities worthy of a preference. Pietro da Cortona, who was born about thirty years after the death of Michael Angelo, was not among the first of those by a great

many ; nor was Benedetto Lutti, a Florentine, who was born “ in fœcibus artium,” and died early in the present century, among the last. Those therefore, who were more constantly stationed at Florence, and who kept up there the face of the arts, were men contented with humbler views, or attached by local considerations to that meridian ; and their succession, we may suppose, was in some degree kept up by an academy, which, although declining in it’s character, was abundantly supported to aid those that fought it. That academy sometimes found among those artists such as might stand at it’s head, but very often in those latter periods it’s chief was brought from Rome ; and sometimes a trifling picture, which happened to please the Grand duke, became the only recommendation of it’s author to that superior office. Of those names, to which no distinguished character was annexed, and where the arts were not rising, no particular enumeration will be wanted. Some of them might have passed in eminence, and the talents they possessed might have been considered as valuable gradations in art, if it had been then to rise ; but after the summit it had passed, a first-rate excellence was denied them. Gabiani, who died about the year 1748, having outlived, as we shall see hereafter, the family of Medici and patronage too, was the last painter of any note that appeared in that country. When we make this remark, we do not mean to say that there were no young men, who were brought up in that academy since the time of Gabiani, and afterwards acquired a distinguished character in other countries. Such will obtain in their proper place the notice that is due to them.

The various character and fortune of the arts at Florence,

through which we have passed, must not be considered as dependent merely on the enterprize or the tameness of artists. There is another cause with which it must ever be connected, and that is the spirit of patronage. For while it is impossible that the elegant arts can flourish without a patronage commensurate to their best scope, and that patronage is liable to be affected by the course of public or private events, it is not the boldest efforts of the artist that can fix the spirit, or decide the fortune, of those arts. Both must be left considerably dependent on those other sources, to which his own powers will often be found to act in a secondary degree.

The patronage, which went along with the exercise of art in Florence, was of a very distinguished nature, and yet not so distinguished as to be free from all the variations which we have observed to attend the fortune of art as a profession. It had its days of glory, and it had also its days of tameness. It was sometimes seen exalted and sublime, and at other times poor and humble. When the profession was gathering an increase of fame, that patronage also rose in character and spirit; and when professional enterprize appeared to droop, we shall not find the same character and spirit of patronage subsisting.

The rulers of Florence as a body of citizens, though not the most constant people in the world, had their share in that patronage, and they shewed in the instance of the gates of St. John the interest which they felt in raising the arts, if their judgment was not equally prompt, or equally elevated, on all other occasions. But that share would have been small, comparatively speaking, and probably unequal to the elevation which was reached by the

arts, if the Medici had not been there. Perhaps on the face of the earth there never existed a family, to which the fine arts, and the general interests of learning, have been so much indebted. We see that family distinguished in general by great talents, yet more distinguished in general by virtues, public and private. It was great in every aspect, good or bad; it could be little in nothing: if vice were occasionally predominant, as that is a small family indeed which never yields a bad branch, that vice was great. We see it rising from an extended scope of commerce to all the greatness of sovereign power; yet in every stage of that ascent, we see the several branches of it, with the fewest possible exceptions, patrons of universal genius, devoted to the extension of all enlightened gifts, and of all that can adorn society. So far we are warranted to speak of those branches, at least, of that illustrious house which appeared in the three next generations after the first great Cosmo, who came into the world with the commencement of the fifteenth century.

That Cosmo, whose extraordinary character, and very extraordinary system of munificence, public and private, is recorded in the pages of history*, led the way to that patronage by which the arts became so much exalted in Florence. He took under his protection the academy of St. Luke, which had been formed in the preceding century. His son Peter indeed, on whom his immense riches devolved, but who did not equally inherit all the virtues of the father, and particularly the amiableness and moderation of his spirit in public life, did not prove so great a blessing to the city. But Lorenzo, the grandson of that Cosmo,

* See Machiavel's Hist. of Florence, lib. 7. p. 172—175.

rose, if possible, greater than that predecessor. With all the other virtues which had adorned the head and heart of Cosmo, he inherited all his zeal for the encouragement of genius, and a much greater portion of taste; and it was the labour of his life to give these their best effects. He was both the *Mecænas* and the *Pericles* of his time, but without any cost to his country. To him we are indebted for the establishment of that "school of design," which brought the arts under his own immediate protection, and has ever since continued them under the eye and protection of the Great dukes of Tuscany.

What must we think of a faction, with a pope* and an archbishop† at it's head, that could form a conspiracy to destroy such a character? His brother Julian fell on the spot by the poyards of the conspirators, but Lorenzo defended himself, and escaped‡. He manifested the value of the life that was saved, by healing all the long distractions of Italy, and by contributing to the highest exaltation of the human mind.

Let us rest here for a moment, before we go on with the account of that family. Those days of Lorenzo, which terminated the fifteenth century, were proud days to Florence; and his patronage of the arts, sufficiently conspicuous in the outlines which have been given, will not need to be pursued in it's detail. But the mention of that conspiracy brings before us a work of art, which flowed from the directions of the senate, and in which we must suppose either that the delicacy of Lorenzo fore-

* Sixtus IV.

† Of Pisa.

‡ See Machiav. Hist.

of Florence, lib. 8. Bower's lives of Popes—Sixtus IV. Felib. V. I. p. 147—150.

bore to interfere, or that his taste was contented for once to submit to his resentment. If therefore that work be any evidence of the taste and spirit with which patronage was then dispensed at Florence, it can only apply with propriety to the senate; and to that body it may apply, as it shews that their passion for the severe and the horrible, which we have already remarked as prevalent in a preceding period, was not extinguished, amidst the superior taste and judgment that were to be found in individuals. The work to which we allude is the painting by Andrea del Castagno of "the conspiracy against the Medici," on the walls of the hall of justice. That conspiracy was indeed infamous, and worthy of being branded to posterity, because it aimed destruction not only at the best friends of human nature and human society, but at the state itself, the disposal of which was by express stipulation to have been surrendered to the pope on the success of that plot. But why was the composition of that subject adopted? Must not the eye revolt from the sight of multitudes hung on gibbets, or put to death in other ways? We naturally cry out with Horace, "*ne coram populo pueros Medæa trucidet.*" And we recollect how much better managed, more temperately, and with more solemnity, was the kindred subject of Brutus's sons. One can hardly avoid to conclude, that some portion of vindictive justice mixed itself in that picture of Andrea, more especially when the leaders of the conspiracy were given in portraits. But the arts should never be brought down from their dignity to vindictive gratifications.

Notwithstanding the general weight of the Medici, and the particular influence of the great Lorenzo, we are not to imagine either that the circumstances of the times were so universally be-

nign in Florence, or that patronage was so universally pure, as to leave the arts to be darkened by no shades. Never was there a people whose minds and affairs had been more disordered, tumultuous, and unruly for two centuries past than those of Florence. Towards the close of the fifteenth century the state was become quite vicious. And that contamination of morals spread itself to the painter's occupation. The pencil, in its ordinary use, was made contributory to disgraceful lusts*. How should it be otherwise, when to the natural influence of dissoluteness in a most irregular state was added the more pernicious contagion of a Borgia in the papal chair, under the name of Alexander VI? The heart becomes appalled, the breast which has drunk of vice shudders, at the review of his abandoned life and systematic crimes, never equalled by eastern or western emperors, never exceeded by any savage on the earth. Shall we wonder that every part of Italy, to which his influence reached, as well as Rome corrupted by his immediate presence, gave a loose to every excess? that they copied their pontifical father in his lusts, the best part of his character, if among deeper sins there can be a better and a worse? The good Lorenzo de Medicis had left this life, and all the remaining checks of his personal influence, the very year in which that wretch succeeded to throw down all morals in the country, and to "intoxicate (as Guicciardini expresses it) the whole world like a venomous serpent." What must have been the contagion of lust in that age, when that shocking picture of Julius Farnese *and* the Virgin Mary (for so we would speak of it) was borne and looked at with complacency by others as well as by his holiness, whose eyes were wont to

* Felib. V. i. p. 203.

feed upon it in his chamber with a rapture exceeding the adoration which was represented as offered in the picture? Is it too harsh to say, that Pinturricchio, hardly less profligate than his employer, deserved at least to be branded with perpetual infamy for painting it?

Thus did Alexander VI. teach the people to convert the pencil into a pander, and the Florentines seized the lesson with avidity. They took the opportunity of collecting and exhibiting in public shews the most indecent paintings, which served them for an occasion of committing the most indecent actions*. Baccio, better known perhaps by the name of Fra Bartolemeo, was shocked at those things, and could not endure them. He had never been fond of painting in the nude, but whatever he had so painted, that was within his reach, he publicly committed to the flames†, as did Lorenzo di Credi and some other painters, following his example. His friend Jerome Savonarola, a dominican, and celebrated preacher at Florence, had exerted himself against those reigning disorders, and had caused the destruction not only of many lascivious paintings, but of paintings merely in the nude. He kept no terms in his public remonstrances, he went to the fountain-head of the evil, he struck at the root of it in the vicious life and manners of Alexander VI. Let Savonarola be called an enthusiast; he was here an enthusiast in his senses, engaged in that purpose which well became him, and acting like an honest man. If his remonstrances were carried by others to excess, and if in that excess many excellent works were destroyed, merely because they were naked, though not

* Felib. V. i. p. 203.

† Ibid. p. 204.

obscene, it could not be helped ; it is a fate attendant on the human passions, which know not where to stop, when they are to regain the ground they have lost, and for the loss of which they are chagrined. There never can be any occasion for the pencil, in subjects devoid of poetic imagery, to approach what may be termed an indecency of action ; but if ever it does so, it has certainly more power to corrupt than any indecent language. If therefore the preaching of Savonarola had gone the full length of the effects it produced, which we are not warranted to say, it is enough to reply, that in the necessity of reforming so grievous an evil it was impossible for him to draw the line, and that he only preferred the virtue and morals of society to the finest paintings and sculptures in the world. His vehemence, however, against the vicious principles at which he leveled was enough to incur the persecution of Alexander, whose vengeance prevailed in the end. Poor Savonarola, with two other dominicans, was burnt in A. D. 1498. Baccio became Fra Bartolomeo among the dominicans. And the country was left to wait for better times to bring it to it's senses and it's morals. We shall now return to the Medici.

The disorders we have mentioned were not the only circumstances unpropitious to the arts in Florence, which followed the death of the good Lorenzo, or were not to be healed by his power. The Medici-family became for a time extremely unsettled, and rather dispersed, leaving it's power in that city to be felt more by reflexion from another meridian than by immediate exercise on the spot. In John the son of Lorenzo arose Leo X. And in a natural son of his brother Julian was seen Clement VII. The former presided over Florence as a tempo-

ral prince ; and the latter before his accession to the pontifical dignity presided over it in virtue of Leo's appointment. These were strong earnestness and anticipations of that future power over the state, which in about forty years after the death of Lorenzo became vested in that family. Yet strong as it was in the enjoyment of the papal chair, and of other high situations in the conclave by others of its branches, it was a little deranged in various periods. It had more than once or twice suffered expulsion ; but it came to know a worse evil than expulsion, in that blot upon its character which first darkened the name of a Cosmo for some base treacheries, and first covered that of a Lorenzo with infamy for a horrid assassination. In addition to those events, which left that family enough to do to maintain its own situation in Florence, some troubles then common to that city with other parts of Italy had not mended the external countenance of the elegant arts. All classes of people, indeed, had something else to think of than the cultivation of those arts, which naturally gave way to the preservation of themselves from the three-fold evils of war, famine, and a plague.

Previous however to the accession of those great evils, the arts did not stagnate with the senate of Florence. That body became engaged for the production of a work, which as a subject exceeded considerably whatever their patronage had produced before. It bespoke an idea which was very enlarged, and in its nature was worthy to be contemplated by a national council. For the execution of that work it was fortunate that the two greatest masters, which the modern world had beheld, were living, and to those two it was committed. They were Leonardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo Buonaroti. The subjects

allotted were these : to the former was given “ the history of “ Nicolo Piccinino, general of the duke of Milan* ” ; to the latter was assigned “ the war of Pisa† ”. And those subjects were to be displayed on the two sides of the council-chamber. As works of art, they must have been precious acquisitions, and most valuable standards of design, from those two masters who were best enabled to give those standards. And wretched must have been the mind of Bandinelli to destroy them, wretched indeed must have been the senate to suffer the chance of that destruction. But perhaps they were doomed evermore to be somewhat wrong in their judgment. Although they were to be commended for directing the attention of their patronage to great and public events, yet in the selection of those particular events, we conceive, their judgment was no more displayed than in the choice of many preceding subjects, or in their approbation of the composition which had been given to them. But when once those works had been fixed, they were invaluable as studies of art, and they were resorted to as studies by all the masters of that age ; it was therefore absurd in the highest degree to leave them to the prejudices of a man who was a very indifferent painter, and a bad colourist, and whose envy of Michael Angelo in particular was known to molest and gall him exceedingly‡.

The ground upon which we have here presumed to question

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. I. p. 73, 75.

† *Ibid.* p. 78.

‡ The piece done by Michael Angelo was drawn in small by his friend Sebastiano da San Gallo, who kept it very carefully. Afterwards in 1540, at the persuasion of Vafari, he painted it in oil, in two colours only. That picture was sent by Giovo into France to Francis I. There are said to be some fragments of the original cartoon now at Mantua.

the judgment of the senate in the selection of those subjects is, that although they were great subjects in which Florence had an interest, yet they were not subjects of glory to Florence, upon the whole. With respect to the war of Pisa, how defensible soever on state maxims it might have been in it's origin, or how successful soever it was to the Florentines in it's issue, certainly Florence never found itself so low as in some periods of that war, nor ever appeared so cowardly as in some of it's scenes, particularly at the bridge of Capelliso; and in the conclusion Pisa gained advantages which it had not before. As to the subject of Piccinino, surely the Florentines had little to boast of against him, nor did he contribute to their triumph, unless the being deceived by his master the duke of Milan were a fair ground of triumph to his enemy; when beaten at last, it was rather his son that was beaten than himself; his broken heart alone secured victory to Florence. Whether these circumstances, not properly considered at first, weighed at length with the senate, and led to the annihilation of those paintings, we cannot pronounce, but it seems by no means improbable.—If the Romans had called the pencil to display in their public buildings the history of Hannibal, would not the observing world have said, that they might have found a more proper subject for their renown, and that they consulted more the display of their art than that of their judgment?

We now return again to the Medici, reserving till we come to Rome the discussion of the patronage dispensed by those branches which filled the papal chair. The troubles we have mentioned had not ceased to affect that house, when there arose another Lorenzo, descended in the second degree from the great character so named, which has already passed our review. He was

reared, and cherished, and actually fixed in power at Florence by Leo X. his uncle. It might therefore naturally be expected that the public virtues of that family would shine forth in him. And it is justice to say, that expectation was not disappointed. He endeavoured to repel the baneful influences of public circumstances upon genius and the elegant arts by all the encouragements of his private munificence. He kept up and animated as much as possible the academy which his great ancestor had founded in the environs of his palace, and he cherished Michael Angelo at the head of it no less than that ancestor had done.

It was not long after that period, when the family having braved all the storms which had threatened them, and having become permanently established in the government of Florence, a Grand duke of Tuscany made his appearance in another Cosmo, collaterally descended from the first of that name, and yet stiled Cosmo I. because he was the first who had attained that title. It could have fallen on none of his family more distinguished than himself for whatever was great, or whose epoch was rendered more illustrious than his by those virtues which constituted the general pride of that family. He felt all that the name of Cosmo demanded from him, and he exemplified all that had given dignity to any other name in his race. In the language of historians he is spoken of as that patron of arts, which hardly left another to be considered before him. And when we take account of the sumptuous buildings in which he called forth the first taste of architecture, when we consider the encouragements he gave to living genius in paintings and statues, in the graving of jewels, plate, and precious stones, and in the curious workmanship of armour and instruments of every kind, we must al-

low him to have been a most comprehensive patron of all that is most elegant in human ingenuity*. We imagine ourselves carried back to those days of brilliancy which shone under the first Cosmo and Lorenzo, and we congratulate a country whose splendour was still ensured by the undiminished virtues of so illustrious a family within her.

To state the procedure of his patronage would be tedious; an exemplification of its spirit will be sufficient. The story of Camillus, on which Salviati was employed by him in the hall of his palace†, had no less judgment and address in its application than grandeur in its original subject. If in its application it was a compliment to the great Cosmo in the preceding century, who like Camillus was banished, and like him was recalled by the affection of his fellow-citizens to receive the title of “father of his country,” that compliment was a fair one in which the republic, in fact, participated as much as his ancestor; nor will the interest, which his own family had in that subject, reduce its vindication, which is established by the universal worth of that Cosmo, and by the elegant modesty with which the application was conducted. It is seen only in the allegory, whose simplicity and neatness does infinite credit to the artist’s understanding, and in which Nicholas Poussin himself could not have succeeded better. On one side of the picture he gave a view of the Arno, with a cornucopia. We complete its meaning of ourselves, and find another Camillus on the banks of that river, and issuing from a real source of all-enriching abundance in the house of Medici. That compliment to the family was indeed carried

* He died, A. D. 1574.

† *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 115.

much farther in detail by Strada, who adorned the ducal palace with the history of the Medici in many subjects*. And certainly if the history of any house deserved to be kept alive, or if public virtue may be roused and warmed by the display of virtuous deeds in any race of citizens, the Medici might take that merit to themselves, and those works should be considered as benefits to the country.

From this general declaration very few abatements can be made unto the time when those works were produced, and Cosmo I. was well entitled to pay those tributes to his house. We do not assert that they would have been paid with equal propriety in subsequent periods of its history. For it is to be lamented that those subsequent periods do not afford a exalted views of that house, and of its influence on the fine arts, as those through which we have passed. Perhaps other causes than those for which some at least of the dukes of Tuscany, who afterwards succeeded, may be accountable, contributed in some degree to that change of circumstances. For it must be remembered, that Michael Angelo† was gone while Cosmo I. was living, and that the period was then arrived, concerning which we have already spoken, when with the loss of that great master, and other concurring causes not to be averted by any influence, a very sensible decline took place by degrees in the profession of art at Florence. Still there was beyond doubt a corresponding decline of character in many of the Medici that afterwards succeeded to the government.

* Felib. V. 3. p. 141.

† He died, A. D. 1564.

Francis I. the son and successor of Cosmo I. was not indeed insensible of those public virtues, nor indifferent to those means of fame, by which his family had been aggrandized, but he was contented to pursue them in a much fainter manner than his father had done. It gives us no very advantageous view of the influence of his patronage, or of the state of arts, in that moment at Florence, when after all the characters it had raised, Frederic Zacchero was sent for to execute some pieces of design for the arrival of Johanna the Emperor's daughter espoused to that Francis, and to compleat a greater object still, which had been left imperfect by Vasari, in painting the dome of St. Mary del Fiore *.

If Francis I. fell short of his immediate ancestor, his brother and successor Ferdinand I. was a wretch in every point of character—a wretch of a cardinal, if he has not been greatly misrepresented, whose impatience for the succession, as all the male issue of Francis I. died young, had recourse to poison, by which not only Francis was carried off, but his duchess in a few hours after him. We expect nothing worthy of record from such a character whose only attention to living genius, or to the exercise of taste, was seen in his beginning to build the chapel of San Lorenzo in the year 1604, and in the magnificence displayed in the year 1600 on the marriage of his niece Mary, a daughter of Francis I. to the French king Henry IV. It was not family-affection, nor any regard for ingenious talent, but the pride of political alliance, which carried him into this latter sacrifice to shew. Alliances with the court of France, which was then in

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 24.

the height of it's splendour, were courted by all the inferior Roman catholic princes in Europe, as it entitled them to the friendship of the house of Bourbon.

Cosmo II. succeeded in the year 1609, upon the death of his father Ferdinand I. He was not without ambition for the fine arts; and yet perhaps that ambition was more a family-pride than any sensibility of their perfections or advantages which grew up with him, and formed his mind. Whatever feelings of that sort he had, they were chiefly expended in carrying on the chapel of San Lorenzo, and the famous mausoleum in which the dukes of Tuscany have since been buried, and on whose splendour, superior perhaps to any other in the western world, it is said that some millions sterling have been consumed. For the rest, his patronage was satisfied with those objects which fell in with the moderation, and quietude, and domestic privacy of his character, little calculated to launch forth into enterprize for mental gratification. His reign indeed, which lasted only twelve years, afforded no great scope. And one should almost conceive that there was hardly an artist left in Florence to be employed by him, when Stella and Callot, both from France, were among the few whom he nourished by pensions, far indeed exceeding their worth*.

In the year 1621 it became the lot of his eldest son Ferdinand II. to take the government into his hands. More active in character than any of his three predecessors, he suffered the arts to participate of that activity; and his reign was long enough in fifty years to have recovered much splendour to Flo-

* Felib. V. 4. p. 51. *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 2. p. 256, 257.

rence, and to his own house. But another circumstance arose, which if it did not actually turn the main current of that activity into an unfortunate direction, at least entailed upon the court of Florence habits of narrowness and gloom, which outlived the house of Medici itself. Ferdinand had married Vittoria de la Rovere, daughter to the last duke of Urbino, one of the most severe and austere women in Italy; a woman of that dark and contracted mind, which was likely in her station to spread among all the greater circles of the country the gloom of formality and devotion in their worst aspects. We shall not wonder, if in the exercise of ingenious talents we find something of that gloom, although Ferdinand endeavoured to resist it, in art, as much as possible. He is spoken of as naturally a very discerning man, and disposed to draw forth and cherish the powers of genius wherever he found them*; but some sacrifices to that gloom he could not avoid, and as he grew older, he probably felt more strongly the impression of an example which stood so near him.

To the account of those sacrifices must be placed, in the palace Pitti, “St. Anthony in the desert looking on the figures “of devils”, by Salvator Rosa. We are sure it was none of his wife’s influence, but his own more enlarged mind, which set the poetic genius of the same artist at work in the same palace on “justice driven from heaven, and taking refuge among peasants”—on “peace crowned with olive between a lion and a lamb, “and burning the accoutrements of war”—on “a philosopher “showing a mask to another man”. Neither could it be to gratify her spirit, that Albano was brought to the palace Mezzo-

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 3. p. 5.

monte for the purpose of painting “ Jupiter receiving a cup “ from Ganimede”; or that Colonna was fetched from Lombardy to give the ornaments around it, and to finish some pieces of a lighter kind, which had been left imperfect in the palace Pitti by San Giovanni a Florentine artist. Even those beautiful lessons on continence, and on the fortitude of self-denial, which Ferdinand committed to the pencil of Pietro da Cortona in the palace last mentioned, had too little of religion to accord with her spirit, and to be the offspring of her influence; yet they gave him honour, as forming one of the compleatest lectures which had ever been brought together on that subject, in the examples of Scipio—of Alexander to the wife of Darius—of Crispus—of Cyrus—of Antiochus giving up his wife to his sick son—of Porfena in the loss of his hand—of Massinissa, and many others. Such of those subjects as were left unfinished by Cortona were completed by Ciro Ferri, who was called from Rome for that purpose, and who, although an artist of another meridian, was afterwards placed by Ferdinand at the head of the Florentine academy, in testimony of the satisfaction he felt in the completion of those subjects*.

In that prince there were undoubtedly many valuable seeds of genius; and whatever check those seeds might sustain from his connexion with a spirit diametrically opposite to his own, they were the last seeds of genius that were found in the successions of that house. His eldest son and successor Cosmo III. had imbibed that dark and dull spirit from his mother's womb, and had brought it up with him into the seat of sovereignty, under

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 54, 55.

the continued influence of that misguiding mother, who had been the duchess's dowager of Tuscany from the year 1670. So compleatly was he formed in her trammels, that history hardly affords a more strange composition of superstition and hypocrisy. The character of religious, whatever qualities besides might attend it, was the surest introduction to his favour, and often succeeded surprizingly without any thing else to back it. By his interest Morigia was raised to the purple, and another monk was made archbishop of Ragusa on the merit of wearing a long beard. He assisted every night at the litanies that were sung in the church of the Annonciada in Florence. But his superstition or his hypocrisy will appear most compleat in the extravagant fit of devotion with which he was seized to touch the holy handkerchief, and for the gratification of which, being then a widower, he actually got himself ordained, and declared by the pope a canon of St. Peter's. In the exercise of that function, clad in a purple habit, and with a surplice over his shoulders, he was conducted to the tribunal, where he not only touched and handled the holy handkerchief with the other relics, but bestowed his benediction on seventy thousand spectators present.

The ascendancy of his mother's influence not only followed him thus to the sacrifice of understanding, but to the extinction of domestic concord. It proved the eternal separation of him and his duchess, the daughter of the duke of Orleans, and a woman of unimpeached character, although possessed of that *gaieté de cœur* which was natural to her native country, and therefore never to be made conformable with the stupidity of mind and manners, which her husband and her mother-in-law persisted to impose on her observance.

In the liberal arts what could be expected from a character so immersed in dullness as that Cosmo was? Yet it is said that he wanted not policy or spirit in the pursuit of his temporal interests. Perhaps that policy was the spur to what little attention he bestowed on those arts. He might think it worth some shew to retain the honour which had attended on his name; but assuredly his superstition was more concerned than his honour in whatever he did. Thus we find him employing Luca Jordano in the church del Carmine on "the apotheosis of a saint"; and again, in the church of the Franciscans, on "the apparition of the Virgin to St. Bernard". He was bold indeed, and we must account for it as we can, but probably it will best be explained by his affectation of that character to which he was least entitled, when he dared to fill the frieze of the library with "science driving out ignorance". When we have mentioned these few things, and some trifling pieces done by Ricci from Venice in an apartment of his palace*, we have exhausted his patronage, unless when he assigned lodgings in the Ducal palace of Campo Marzo at Rome to Benedetto Lutti, on his going there as a young man to study†.

Another Ferdinand was the eldest son of that Cosmo, although he did not live to succeed his father in the government. But, as Grand prince of Tuscany, he took some notice of the arts. And one incident is sufficient to be mentioned; there are not many indeed to be adduced. Crespi, having finished at Bologna a picture, which he conceived from the peculiar turn of that prince would give him the greatest satisfaction, determined to undertake the

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. i. p. 203.

† *Ibid.* p. 131, 132.

fatigue of a journey in order to present it to him at Florence. And nothing could exceed the prince's joy at receiving it, unless the condescensions he shewed to the artist, more excessive than one should have expected for having obtained "the murder of the innocents*."

That prince dying without issue, Cosmo III. was succeeded in the year 1723 by John Gaston his younger son and only remaining male descendant. A daughter was married to John William then elector palatine. Of John Gaston we have nothing particularly to relate which concerns the arts, only that he kept up the establishments of his ancestors, by which the arts were kept in motion, as it were by mechanical progress. With him the illustrious race of Medici became extinct in the year 1737. And by his death without issue the Grand duchy devolving, or being claimed to devolve, as a forfeited fief to the Imperial crown, it was given by the emperor Charles VI. to his son-in-law the duke of Lorrain, who became emperor in 1745, by the title of Francis I. and died in 1765.

It is in vain to enquire after any patronage of the arts in Florence while the sovereignty remained in his hands. He never took up his residence in that city; the old palace of the Cosmos and Lorenzos was, in fact, shut up for thirty years; of course every thing appeared neglected, with this exception, that the establishments formerly made for the encouragement of the arts were suffered to go on, and to do what good they might in the languor which had covered them. Under those circumstan-

* Abrege de la Vie, V. 3. p, 72.

ces it will easily be conceived that the spirit of art must suffer for want of the animation which supreme authority and example can best give; nor was that animation supplied by those lords who enjoyed the power of the country in the absence of the sovereign, and who were probably more intent on the pride of that power than on any thing else. So far as a peculiar strength of genius can surmount difficulties and discouragements, which it will always do in some degree, an exception must be made for it here. Gabiani bore up considerably the Florentine school in an early part of the period now under consideration. Ignatius Huckford his disciple might have followed him much later in time by the disparity which was between them. He seemed indeed to have no feeling of himself, but that which marks the tamest disciple; for his language from morning to night was a dull and stupid devotion to his master, his master's school, and his master's manner; "*il mio maestro Gabiani;*" "*la scuola di Gabiani;*" "*la maniera di Gabiani.*" Yet from the hands of that Ignatius Huckford, or rather from the galleries of Florence even in that period, came forth the rare talents of Bartolozzi and Cipriani, which have done so much honour to the British school. The latter indeed has left us to lament his loss; the former still lives, no less great in design than in a precious talent of engraving, and we have the felicity to see those talents growing in vigour as they grow in years.

Peter Leopold, a younger son of the emperor Francis I. and grandson of Charles VI. became the next Grand duke of Tuscany, and afterwards succeeded to the empire on the death of his elder brother Joseph II. without issue. Of his excellent polity in reforming the abuses of the state, and introducing a

better order of government than had been long experienced, there is much to be said. And of his disposition to do every thing, which his situation afforded, for the advancement of the fine arts, as well as of every thing else which might make his country to flourish, there are testimonies enough. He gave them from his own purse the spacious building, which the academy now enjoys, on the site of an ancient hospital, instead of the contracted apartment immemorially allotted to the old school, and he called the new one by the name of the Royal Academy. He generously expended no less than five or six thousand pounds in the purchase of drawings and models, which appeared necessary for the compleat study of the arts. And it must be remembered, that he inherited neither the blood nor the riches of the Medici, but depended on a revenue which would have been considered by any branch of that family as below aggrandisement.

It is true that those and other generous efforts to announce the dispositions of his patronage were not attended with the success which they deserved. And how could they possibly succeed better? What could he do with the Florentines, such as they were become in the days which had brought him to rule over them? In his father's days, who resided as we have observed at Vienna, the general mass of the Florentines had shewn themselves, on occasions, as it were insensible to refinement. About the year 1761 a fire broke out in one side of the galleries, which threatened very speedily to destroy the whole, and all the precious works of art deposited within them, which had been the great resources of study to every artist. Equally ignorant of the means to extinguish a fire, and unwilling to extinguish it there,

the people fled to their houses, and locked their doors. The soldiers were sent to demand their assistance, but in vain; they either continued immured, or would give no help. In vain did some strangers remonstrate, “ have you no sensibility of the loss “ which you yourselves would suffer in the destruction of those “ galleries, which cause foreigners to visit your city, and to which “ therefore you are indebted for a great means of your support”? They were insensible even for themselves. At length, the marquiss Ricardi, with about a score of Englishmen, and some soldiers for their assistants, put a stop to the flames by making a direct separation between the part on fire and that which was next endangered.

If the emperor Francis I. found the Florentines to be such characters, they did not shew themselves much better disposed towards refinement under Peter Leopold, or ready to meet any of his generosities in any other way than to take his money, and to thwart his views. He had consented to gratify their apparent wishes by expending many thousand pounds for the encouragement and re-establishment of their ancient staple in the woollen manufacture; when after some years he discovered that the cloth sent him to wear as Florentine was English cloth, and that his money had only fed an audacious job. He laid out at their request vast sums of money to drain the marshes, which on one pretence or another still remained undrained; at last he found that his own private secretary, who had eaten of his and his mother's bread from his birth, was connected with the clan who had put the money into their own pockets. What could arise from such repeated experience but a situation in which no good could be done, among his own people, by any acts of his

munificence that tended to any improvement whatever? And if those acts of munificence can effectuate no improvement at home, the argument which would extend that prospect to strangers applies very coldly to the most generous bosom.

The sense, which that Great duke entertained of the state of arts in his own country, was very apparent in the question which he is said to have put to Sir Anthonio Raphael Mengs, when that artist visited Florence. "How comes it, says Leopold, that there are now no great artists in the world"? It ought to be told, in order to acquit his highness of any deficiency in politeness, that the artist to whom he spoke, great in name, and idolized at the court of Madrid, had executed for him a subject or two, we believe Joseph's dream and something else, which, having for a few years been a "vade mecum" with its author from Florence to Madrid, and from Madrid to Florence, and having been again and again re-touched in every interval of those journeys, was at last deposited in the Ducal palace, with all its accumulated labours, in which the first outline had been lost over and over again. The like thing happened to Mengs's own portrait given to the gallery, which had been so worked, that unless it had been favoured by the height at which it was placed, at last if not at first, it could not have been observed with patience. What was the true estimate of that and all such labour, and how it ought to be regarded by discerning eyes, was happily and most delicately shewn by a gentle touch of the pencil afforded soon afterwards by a much greater man than Mengs, who gave his portrait as an artist to the same gallery, and to be placed next to that of Mengs; we mean the late Sir Joshua Reynolds. We have no right to say that Sir Joshua in-

tended reproof: but it was impossible to look upon the free and masterly expression of the one portrait, produced with every delicious lightness and grace of hand, without seeing the contrast which labour had made so prejudicial to the other. It may be, though we know not that it was, those different effects which became the cause of separating those pictures, and of placing that of Mengs at a higher distance. Neither can it be pronounced, how far an opinion on those works of Mengs had led to the grand Duke's question. That must be left to the best conjecture which circumstances afford.

Here the curtain must be dropped. It rests with the present Grand duke to accomplish more, as a patron of the arts, than his father could do. We understand, there are now some increased energies in that academy. And if the prince can succeed in regenerating the people, he may hope to regenerate the arts of Tuscany. Else, while the fruits of those energies shall be reaped by foreigners, the fine arts will not be rescued from decline there, although the academy shall be munificently provided, and shall appear to flourish.

R O M E.

CHAP. III.

Rome later than Florence in the cultivation of the arts, from unsurmountable causes—indebted to Florence for her earliest artists—what circumstances contributed to bring her forward as a theatre of art—the discovery of antique works a supreme advantage to modern art in the refinement of design, and the communication of style—those works formed on the principles of a philosophic address to the mind—the seasonable lesson afforded by those principles to modern art—how those refined principles may be attained and exemplified by the modern artist—in what respects the study of those antiquities may nevertheless be insufficient to form the perfect painter—a new and great epoch opened to Roman art by Raphael Sanzio d'Urbino—the similarity of professional character in Apelles and Raphael, and of the state of painting under each—a very sensible pause and declension in the vigour of Roman art after the time of Raphael—the adverse circumstances of public affairs soon afterwards at Rome—the spirit of Raphael unequally maintained by his best disciples, with Julio Romano at their head—the mischievous effects of the violent and factious pretensions of the painters Michael Angelo da Caravaggio and Gioseppe d'Arpino—reflexions on the bitter contentions too frequent among artists.

ROME for a considerable time held only a subordinate station in the progress of art. As in the ancient world she was for some ages second to Tuscany, and only became second at a great distance of time, in the works of elegance ; so in the modern world she did not begin to make a figure in those works, till long after Tuscany had risen to great character by their cultivation, and had supplied her with considerable means of becoming a new and successful theatre of art. Without that native and forward spirit of refined ingenuity which had ever distinguished the Tuscans, or without so great a portion of it as they possessed, without any school or seminary of design, and perhaps without an artist capable of exciting such a spirit and of raising such a school, even the splendor of papal authority was insufficient to give the arts a speedy and flourishing establishment within her.

If we reflect, that from the days of Cimabue to those of Leonardo da Vinci, or, in another view which meets the same calculation, from the time of Innocent IV. to that of Nicholas V. the illustrious friend of the learned and the elegant—a period comprising two hundred years from 1242 to 1455—the papal chair often vacant for a length of time had received no less than one and thirty popes, some of whom were deposed, and from the rest of whom we can only select six that enjoyed the pontificate more than ten years, while the best and most liberal characters were in the number of those whose reigns were shortest ; if we reflect further, that while Avignon became the residence of the popes, Rome was bereft of their presence for seventy-two years, and those not the least precious years of all that period, from 1305 to 1377, during which time every thing must have drooped greatly at Rome ; if we carry our views further to the deplora-

ble condition in which that city was actually found by Martin V. on his return to it in the year 1420, when most of its stately edifices lay in ruins, the churches were neglected and ready to fall, the streets were covered with filth and rubbish, and the people were reduced to the utmost poverty, even to want the necessaries of life*, in consequence of its having been so much deserted by its pontifical father, and overrun by lawless usurpers; if we reflect on these circumstances, no one can expect that the elegant arts would have footing there so long as any of those circumstances existed.

What advances towards establishment could they gain from the employment of Margaritone or any others by Urban IV. when he filled that see only three years, amidst the troubles which obliged him to leave Rome for Orvieto; when thirty years elapsed after him, without producing hardly a pope who reigned longer than himself, or one among those successors who took any notice of art; and when all the vigour of papal attention was absorbed for that length of time by the politics of Sicily, or the absurdity of crusades. What more could arise from the enquiries of Benedict XI. after the best artists of Florence, than the mosaic of Giotto over the gate of St. Peter's, and a few paintings in the church of Minerva, when nine months terminated the duration of that pontificate? What evidence was it of a general taste and cultivation of the arts, that Cavallini a Roman was a disciple of Giotto; that he wrought with his master in the mosaic of St. Peter's; and that he afterwards executed a crucifix in St. Paul's at Rome, which was rendered

* Bower's Popes, V. 7. p. 205, 212.

famous by the falshood of legends?*. How was the meridian of Rome benefited by the few artists who followed Clement V. to Avignon?† Or how would that meridian have been improved, had those artists or any others been employed there, when a period of eighteen years, the longest which had marked any pontificate in those two centuries, was consumed by the next pope John XXII. in sacrificing every thing to avarice and the accumulation of wealth for the purpose of maintaining another crusade?

The fact is, that the artists employed in those periods, and in later periods than those, chiefly came from Florence. From that school were drawn the great professors of art, although there might be, and probably were, in Rome as well as in every part of Italy, professional men gradually coming forward, who were nevertheless formed in a great degree under Tuscan masters, but to whom the times were not then sufficiently favourable, if their own advancements were worthy, to raise them into character and vogue. When Nicholas V. who adorned the papal chair more than any that had filled it before him‡—when Sixtus IV. who did not adorn it by his character, although from an ostentatious spirit he chose to patronise the arts, and founded the Vatican library§—when those pontiffs called forth the great works of the pencil which were executed in the Vatican or its chapels, it was on the artists of Tuscany that those calls were made. All the principal buildings, which were raised with so much magnificence by Sixtus IV. were the designs of Baccio Pintelli a

* Felib. V. 1. p. 109.

† Vasari, V. 1. p. 42.

‡ Bower's Popes, V. 7. p. 281.

§ Ibid. p. 315.

Florentine*. There were no other artists but Tuscans then competent to execute any of those works. Nor was it long indeed before the time of Raphael that Rome could speak of her own artists, or that she became visited for the study of art. It was only in the pontificate of Pius II. and about the period of 1460, that Paul the Roman appeared in his native city as a sculptor, distinguished by several good figures, particularly that of St. Paul at St. Angelo's bridge, those of the apostles in silver, which were afterwards torn by the Imperialists from the altar in the pope's chapel, and an equestrian statue in St. Peter's near the chapel of St. Andrew†. He seems indeed to have laid the foundation of a farther cultivation in his art at Rome by many respectable pupils who became distinguished after him.

But it was, in truth, those great works of Sixtus IV. which first opened that city to the views of the world as a theatre of art. On those works were engaged all the best abilities which the age afforded in other schools. And those works were followed by others rising still higher in merit under succeeding pontificates. It was a fortunate circumstance for that meridian; that except the two next successions, in which it is true that the fine arts did not stagnate, although what was done in them is not worthy of notice for the infamy of those two popes, the pontificates that followed for more than half a century were sustained by men, who were second to no others in any ages of the world for the cultivation of all that is elegant.

In addition to those circumstances, Rome possessed in her own

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 299.

† Ibid. p. 298.

situation what was sure to make her one day the mistress of modern art, when those antiquities, which were buried in her ruins, should happen to be recovered. As the city came to be cleared of those ruins, and renovated in its buildings, many of those antiquities had come to light, and a reviving spirit of refinement had stimulated a search for more. Those precious advantages, especially as the acquisition of them increased, left no hesitation to any that wished to obtain a genuine and classical foundation in design, whether they should resort to Rome for that foundation, which was only to be obtained from the study of those antiquities. Thus Rome became, in fact, after a while a kind of university in art, through which it was considered as necessary that all should pass who were desirous of gaining degrees in professional fame. In process of time that resort was so great as to leave no other rival to Rome, and almost to evacuate every other school or institution of art. In the period, however, to which our views are now confined, that is, towards the close of the fifteenth century, no public school or institution had become fixed in that city.

We have just intimated, that the advantage immediately flowing to modern art from the study of those antiques was a new spirit of design. The artist was led not only into correctness, but into style, of which he had no conceptions. He could have none but from a copious study of ancient works; unless, like Michael Angelo, his mind was capable of advancing from few hints into vast original ideas. What that artist had seen of antiquities was sufficient to inspire him with all that followed from his own wonderful mind: others must move towards the same advantages in a more gradual way. But the same study would be sure

to produce the same improvements in all; proportioned to the capacities of receiving them. The artist, who had been trained to the accomplishment of a happy expression of nature, and who had gone on laboriously to the attainment of that power, presently became struck with views of design far more extensive than he had ever been able to discover. He beheld in the statues and other sculptures of the ancients, which had happily survived the fate of their paintings, the excellencies of style, which while in all its variations it was founded on nature, was new and surprising to the man who had followed plain nature for his guide. In that style comprehensively considered, he saw the powers of his art, although an imitative art, not copying nature with servility, but in fact outdoing nature, either by uniting perfections which in nature are dispersed, or by disencumbering her from such qualities as might not be necessary to a selected subject, and so substituting in some respects ideal for real nature.

Pursuing that style through all its variations, he saw the sublime, or what raised his mind as high as it could go towards the conceptions of sublime, in a combination of a unity of ideas between the possible and impossible, in the employment of forms perfect beyond all that is perfect in nature, although every part is founded on nature itself, and in a mode of execution that is universally great and serious, correspondent alike in the loftiness of its inventions and its forms.

He saw the beautiful, distinguished by an assemblage of every possible perfection, suitable to the character or subject, and transcendent in all its different forms beyond the power even of violent expression to disturb it, as in the Laocoon; he saw it

varying greatly, but evermore compleat ; aspiring to the sublime and divine in the Apollo-Belvidere, human and heroic in the Meleager, masculine in the Wrestlers, the Gladiator, and the Hercules-Farnese, purely feminine in Niobe and her daughters, graceful in the Apollo and Venus de Medicis at Florence ; in all it's different subjects divested of every superfluity, but retaining every essential characteristic, and maintained in a more diffusive softness than was proper to the strict sublime.

He saw the graceful, in the Venus de Medicis, in the Apollino, the Hermaphrodite, and the remains of the beautiful Cupid in the Villa Borghese : he saw it distinguished by a moderation in attitude, together with a softness, and rather a mildness of gesture, and compleated by an ease, variety, and gentleness of execution, but without minuteness, without being strained, and without bordering upon affectation.

He saw the expressive, although the ancient Greeks preferred beauty to expression, or so modelled the latter that the form should never be disturbed by it's effects. The expression, therefore, which he saw was that which shewed the mind to be interested in the action, yet so interested as philosophy and refined affection would feel, not that which was carried to every outward and common manifestation of the passion, very probably with the sacrifice of beauty in the whole.

He saw, in short, every rarity of style except that which had principally, if not solely, engaged his study, and which we may call the natural style, as attached to the pursuit of simple and ordinary nature, without a preference of it's best subjects, or any

enrichment of the objects selected, for the purpose of pleasure, and of effecting a stronger and more refined impression.

Those exquisite discoveries must have afforded to the modern artist very elevated ideas of design, when he came to perceive that they were substantiated on the solid principles of mental gratification. For it is not to be questioned, that the imitation of objects may be fashioned to create a higher delight, and more profound contemplations, than the original objects themselves. But that can only be done by the combination of something ideal, depending on a choice of parts which at the same time originate in nature and concenter with our ideas, but so adapted by the judicious powers of art as to cause a singular sensation.

The production of those higher sensations in all the different species of Grecian style makes it manifest that those works were formed on philosophic principles, as we know that they were addressed to a philosophical people. And what nobler or more seasonable lesson could the modern artist derive for his own improvement from the study of those antiquities? In his own past studies he had seen nothing in his art that was combined with any principles of philosophy. When the arts were first revived, and long afterwards, he had seen nothing of a spirit of philosophy in the world. He must have known, that the world was then over-clouded by ignorance : he must have been convinced, that the best perfections of his art were, properly speaking, mechanic. How must his mind have expanded then, if it had strength enough to expand, when he saw the powers of his art, whose best character had been it's imitation, carried into the regions of refined instruction? when he saw that imitation elevated into

style, and that style becoming a purity of taste on the unerring principles of nature most highly finished, and brought into union with the most rectified ideas? when he saw the invention, which had ever been considered as a primary attribute of art, stripped of every wildness and caprice, and regulated in perfect harmony for giving a rational effect to the whole? when he saw the alliance, which had ever been spoken of, between his own art and poetry most happily illustrated by an outline, a character, a spirit of composition, a selection of parts, and an elevation of conception through the whole, capable of exciting at once the liveliest contemplations and the highest pleasure? when, in short, he saw in the expression of art no longer the mere entertainment of the eye, but the language of fine writing, and the impressive sentiments of a meliorated philosophy? Such were the compositions of ancient art; and such would be the advantages infused into the minds of those who studied them, if they were studied aright.

If it be asked, how and by what process those philosophical principles of truth and character, which distinguished Grecian art, may be attained? The answer should be sufficient, that they are to be attained in the same manner by which any other parts of philosophical theory are acquired, that is, by close and familiar study. But a more specific answer is capable of being given with respect to art. The philosophical spirit in the style of the Greeks arose, if we may venture to compress its source, from that study which enabled them to make a selection of parts most equal to the perfect expression of the subject before them. Let the modern artist then acquaint himself thoroughly with human nature, at least so far as to trace its various characters and passi-

ons, and to see how they mark themselves on the human frame, especially in superior minds; for every character and passion in nature has its principles by which it may be traced, and those external criterions also both of feature and action which will be found in the human figure. Let him next proceed to confirm his own reflections by comparative references either to the result of the same studies exemplified in the works of the Greeks, or to such examples in living nature, as may come nearest to his views, or to both. And when by the strength of his own mind, which must ever preside over the whole, he has formed that selection of parts which the character before him demands, and has made up from ideal nature what may be wanting in living models, he will have proceeded in the same plan which was pursued by the greatest masters in Greece, and his success will be equal to theirs in arriving at the full philosophy of his art.

Yet we are not to consider that study of ancient works as yielding all that in modern views, at least, is found important to the painter. It is to the credit of modern art, as the means of its engaging in subjects to any extent, that among other advantages it has added to the general executions of the pencil a complete knowledge of perspective, the necessity of which soon became apparent, when the subjects of scripture, often copious in their display, were opened to its pursuit. The Greeks were prevented by their attention to beauty from undertaking, unless urged by rare necessity, those great compositions which required numerous figures and a variety of appearances; because a beautiful object demands sufficient space for its exhibition; and a number of objects, although beautiful in themselves, take off the attention that should be drawn to the perfection of the principal

figure. The moderns, at least in the earlier stages of their art, acted under a very different impression. They were not so sensible of beauty, nor had they so much studied perfection; perhaps they were willing enough to avoid the necessity of displaying what they did not accurately understand, and to embrace a plan of execution which might serve as a substitute for both; those too, whose taste they had to please, were more opulent than philosophical, and more generally ignorant than great in mind. Such were more likely to be satisfied with the scene that was copious than with one which was perfect, while the artist equally embraced the same choice for his own convenience. By the theory of perspective he could give all the effect which was necessary to multitudinous figures and appearances, without labouring on their perfection. He soon found the convenience of throwing them into groupes, and the art of distinguishing the planes, with their proportionable diminution; leaving to the ancients, if we may pronounce of their paintings by what appears in many of their sculptures yet existing, that assemblage of figures which hid from each no part of its peculiar excellence. Undoubtedly this has contributed to the facility of modern art, and it has not lessened the accuracy with which objects are represented; it was also a manifest improvement on the rudeness pursued in the first stages of modern art; but it would become a misfortune, if having sufficed for the more laborious philosophy and perfections of the ancients, it should terminate as a bar, when of itself it is none, to the cultivation of those advantages.

Those advantages will still be found undiminished in their proper estimation, and in the rank which is due to them, although it be further observed, that the study of those ancient sculptures

was not incapable of communicating by it's influence what may pass for imperfection in the painter. It was not incapable of drawing the pencil into a kind of stiffness and formality, and a want of tenderness, natural enough to sculpture, but disadvantageous to painting; unless that study were carefully blended with those observations which good understanding would make on living nature, and on those appearances of the beautiful or the graceful which are displayed in the active world. For want of that needful attention, those disadvantages were observed to depreciate the excellence of some modern pencils for a considerable time.

Nor were those the only disadvantages which followed, but followed by the fault of those who studied, and not by any imperfection of those ancient sculptures. They who studied them at Rome became so devoted to design as not to concern themselves much about the theory of colours. Indeed local colours, in which forms and character are very much lost, would tend to defeat the purposes of their study. And therefore they either did not know, or did not value, the system of light and dark objects, which distinguished the Venetian school. Both the objects and the colours introduced into their pictures were all massed under *claro scuro*, which better enabled them to indulge the beauties of design; and when adapted especially to solemn subjects, under which it classes, that *claro scuro* had indeed an advantage over the Venetian system, although the latter might be better suited to the familiar. In that indifference about colours perhaps they encouraged themselves by the belief, that an eminence in design, which was then the pride of all, would excuse a deficiency in other parts of execution. That

deficiency however in the circumstance of colouring crept very much upon artists after they had visited Rome, and even upon those who had passed for respectable colourists before. Of this observation Annibal Carachi will hereafter afford a proof among many others.

Thus stood the opportunities, which Rome afforded to those who should use them rightly, of raising the power of design to a new character,

When Raphael had appeared for some time, and had come to discover not only from the study of the antiques, but from the works of Michael Angelo, particularly in the Capella Sistina*, how much the dry and mechanical practice in which he had been brought up to attend to the minuteness of circumstances more than to the spirit of the subject, was disgraced by the grandeur of style which resulted from the philosophical study of art, the epoch arrived which gave a new and distinct character to Rome, and laid the foundation, if we may not say of a new school at that time, as there was then none actually formed, yet of a new spirit and practice in art, which came from thence to eclipse every other.

It was favourable to the character and fortune of Raphael, as well as to Michael Angelo, that he was born in a period when the arts had been carried by a succession of eminent men to considerable improvements, and in a situation convenient for his profiting by those improvements, as well as for consulting the

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 79. Felib. V. 1. p. 223.

antiquities which had been then discovered. If those advantages were common to both those artists, there was nevertheless some difference in the species of talent with which they were apprehended by each. Michael Angelo, with no more of those advantages before him than was within the reach of Raphael, grasped them at once; he transplanted in his own mind the full spirit of the antiques, and he gave what was wanting in perfection to the advances which any moderns had made towards style. Raphael appears not to have been so quick in his progress, although he was wonderfully great in the end. We see him for some time contented to go on in the manner he had learnt from his master, and we have no reason to suppose that he would have been led by any ideas of his own to alter that manner, if the reputation of Leonardo da Vinci's works and Michael Angelo's at Florence had not drawn him thither to consult them. Even after he had once consulted them, they do not seem to have had their full effect upon his mind, until he had studied them again by a second visit to that city. And indeed we are left to consider his first manner as not completely relinquished before he had obtained a sight of those superior works of Michael Angelo in the Capella Sistina.

These things afford no proofs of any dullness in his apprehension of art, but of the slower progress naturally made by bright minds, where they have much to unlearn. It appears to have been the rare fortune of Michael Angelo, that he had nothing to unlearn. His excellent apprehension, therefore, being not improperly warped, was left free to expand in original conceptions; while it was reserved for his great contemporary to be led

more gradually for some time by the contemplation of express examples.

If some men render themselves conspicuous by the quickness with which they seize on original principles, others are seen no less brilliant and wonderful by carrying to high perfection the principles which have flowed from studies that were not their own. In the latter description Raphael stands most eminently distinguished. The fame of Michael Angelo by no means eclipses the elevation of that style, which resulted from Raphael's deliberate investigation of the finer spirit of art, and which has become to the modern world a standard everlastingly true, never surpassed by those of his own time, and never to be surpassed or rivaled by others.

But in that renown of style, as in other respects, the difference between him and Michael Angelo was great. While both were animated with those enlarged views of their profession, which do not terminate in the entertainment of the eye, but are extended to the display of character, and to that superior expression which renders their art a philosophic address to the mind; the grandeur which they reached was different in each. In Michael Angelo it partook of the severe and terrible; in Raphael it was mild and gracious. We know not that in either it may properly be pronounced to have reached the sublime, unless in a part only of the works of the former in the Capella Sistina: that sublime seems to have rested with the Greeks in the display of their divinities: yet both the moderns of whom we are speaking approached near to that style in their conception and invention,

although but rarely in their forms ; and the mode of execution in Raphael was well suited to it's expression.

Notwithstanding any of those circumstances, it will not be wondered at that this last artist did not reach the sublime of the ancients, even when he treated their deities in the history of Psyche, if we reflect that he had neither the assistance of the finest Greek statues, nor the impulse of that theology by whose spirit the Greeks were wound up to the highest veneration of their deified characters. The walk, which appears to be most appropriate to his talents, was that of philosophers, apostles, and prophets, which fill the most venerable stations among mortals, and call forth whatever the profoundest contemplation of man can bring to sustain the subjects in which they are engaged. Those subjects, dignified in themselves, must be met by a correspondent dignity in the style which embraces them. And to that style Raphael was encouraged by the spirit of the age in which he lived—a great age, replete with characters studious of learning and philosophy then spreading in the world, and therefore fond of the instruction conveyed by the arts, fond of those more profound compositions, which entered into the spirit of superior character, and made some study necessary to develop their beauties. The prevalence of so refined a taste could never have found a pencil more suited and equal to gratify it than that of Raphael, who led the reflecting mind through every part of his great compositions, and did not leave it's reflexions merely to feed on what his pencil had set before them, but carried them back by an artful insinuation in every figure to what had preceded, as well as forward to what might be conceived to follow the immediate action. This rare and masterly address to the

mind, this refined philosophy of art, in which never man went beyond him, and beyond which an interesting instruction cannot go, will be found most happily distinguished in his divine compositions. The determinate action never appears conclusive, but rather just beginning, which gives such a spirit to the whole, that every thing seems to be in motion. And that animation, running through every part of his works, is further secured by his nice and judicious use of contrast in the motion of his figures, and in their different parts, and in every variety of direction; while the beauty of his composition is maintained by the scientific form of his groups, by a proper equilibrium given to the whole, and by a wise restraint in the number of figures, so that none may be superfluous or idle. If their attitudes frequently indicate repose, it was in concord with the intention, and to illustrate the sentiment alluded to in the figure.

This unity of intention constitutes the glory of Raphael's invention, reconciled in the utmost harmony with his composition. His invention is never such as is seen in many who have come after him, and who have prided themselves on that faculty; it is not merely the invention of a fine thought, which in no degree connects with the subject; but it is the invention which shews a continued idea in the artist, and keeps up one continued idea in the beholder, from the first outset of the work to the last stroke of the pencil. It is thus that invention and composition should ever go hand in hand, and afford a mutual support to each other, as they do in the works of that great master. For as composition is the happy assemblage of those objects which are the result of invention, that skilful ordinance of every part,

which while it raises variety, and even contrast, yet maintains a due keeping of the whole in a correct harmony of idea; so the invention, which is not harmonized and cemented to strengthen the special intent of the subject, and which does not make every figure and every action in the piece lead on by its own particular impression to the full effect of the whole, is impertinent and displeasing.

It grew from the same talent of a most chaste and correct invention, that all the characters of Raphael were given in perfect truth. We speak not here merely of his truth in design, which was nevertheless executed in the precision and spirit of the ancients, giving force to all the essential parts of the figure, on which the character more immediately depends, and touching more gently the insignificant and superfluous ones. What we now advert to is that precious talent, more intimately connected with invention, which exhibited all his personages in such precise truth of figure, and countenance, and attitude, that they seem both in soul and body to be the very characters intended for their situations, and naturally to act the part allotted to them by the artist. In this respect he was not inferior to the ancient Greeks, if he fell short of them in certain exquisite forms. Those perfect masters in art could not have succeeded better than Raphael has done in all the general variety of his characters. And the carefulness, with which they attended to that truth of character, is wonderful. Attached as they were to the beauty of forms, that attachment was lost and forgotten when the character would not suffer it to be consulted. They bestowed it in its due measure on the Gladiator in the Borgheze, whose habits of exercise were such as naturally contributed to a perfection of form; but they bestowed

it not on the Arrotino or Knife-whetter in the gallery of Florence, to whom an inferior, a coarser, and a worse proportioned shape was more suitable.

So in the Spasimo di Sicilia of Raphael, now in the royal palace at Madrid, the executioners attending upon Jesus Christ in his passage to Calvary, when he faints under the weight of his cross, and particularly the man who rudely pulls him by a rope round his waist, compelling him to rise, and eager to get on to the place of execution, are given in a coarseness of form becoming their vulgar and brutal characters, and yet varying from each other in those degrees of coarseness and vulgarity in frame, which are suited to the greater or less degrees of unfeeling brutality conspicuous in their minds and actions. Raphael was too chaste and correct in his judgment to treat those ordinary characters beyond the truth which was due to them; he was too wise to give them any advantage beyond the different shades of brutality with which they were marked; and he was too great a master of composition to let them diminish the attention which ought to be engaged by the very beautiful form and most expressive countenance of Christ himself.

Domenichino might have profited better by Raphael's great success in the truth of character, when he undertook his famous picture in the chapel of St. Andrew within the church of St. Gregory at Rome. There the figure of the executioner, who is giving stripes to the faint, is far more admired by all than the faint himself, who as the hero of the piece should be its principal object. And perhaps the same error has been run into by most of the

great painters who have flourished since the beginning of the seventeenth century.

If Raphael was so perfect in the truth of character, it was on the foundation of nature that those characters were raised, especially in his later works, when he came to see clearly how far he might proceed with the antiques, and where it would be proper for the painter to quit the spirit or the rules of sculpture, that he might not lose the spirit of nature. The simplicity of nature was therefore his great guide, at the same time that every thing was grand and elevated. His thoughts were all simple and natural, while they were most exalted. All the variety seen in his figures, and especially in the air of his heads, was the variety of nature, the source of boundless diversity. His attitudes, in which he was always equally happy, were not more fine and noble than most naturally expressive, and contrasted without affectation. All his expressions were just and easy, while they were most elevated and affecting; if they were moderate, it was without coldness, and if they were strong, it was without exaggeration.

To this simplicity and truth of nature, so happily preserved amidst the grandeur and beauty of the antique, Raphael added another talent which had been unknown from the days of Apelles. Whether it first appeared in his hands among moderns, or whether it had been possessed by Correggio before he had seen Raphael's works at Rome, is not very material. It is enough that the power of which we are speaking was the just claim of Raphael, although it was also justly claimed by Coreggio. It was that consummate grace, which perhaps may be better conceived than explicitly defined and described. We know not how to call

it by the name of a perfection, neither is it rightly termed beauty, but it is an excellence which sets off every thing, it assists what is beautiful, and it makes more pleasing that which is perfect. Beauty is itself an idea of perfection, and so grace is an idea of both; it is the precious talent of placing agreeably and engagingly before us beautiful and fine objects, so that they shall captivate every mind, whether enlightened in art or not. It is in painting what beneficence is in life, it makes every amiable character more lovely and engaging, and it covers a multitude of failings. So it appeared under the pencil of Raphael, setting off to greater advantage whatever perfections he possessed, and covering from keen observation those parts, whatever they were, in which he might less excell. It was that grace, without which every competitor, how distinguished soever in other respects, was kept at a distance from him. Had Fra Bastiano been possessed of it, perhaps he might have become a more formidable competitor, with the power of colouring acquired from Georgione, in addition to the grandeur of design intensely studied under the very encouraging auspices of Michael Angelo himself.

As Raphael resembled Apelles in the gift of consummate grace, which had been conceded to the latter by the universal suffrage of antiquity, so that consummate grace was the only thing wanting to modern art in the days of the former, as it had been the only thing wanting to ancient art in the age of the illustrious Grecian. If Raphael, as well as Apelles, did not comprize in his own pencil all the improvements of his predecessors and contemporaries, yet it may truly be said to have been the fortune of both those artists to give the finishing touch to painting in each of their days.

To look with a scrupulous eye on the circumstances in which the pencil of Raphael might not comprize those improvements, is not the way in which individual greatness ought ever to be viewed, as it carries the absurdity of expecting universal perfection in one character. In whatever respects he might fall short of ancients or moderns, certainly the aggregate of his talents was too great to suffer any disparaging comparisons. With respect to the ancients, let it be supposed that their collocation and action of the muscles was more scientific, exact, and delicate than his; yet who shall charge him with a want of knowledge in that circumstance? They who shall go beyond him in that point of art must indeed have studied profoundly that curious science, and its reference to painting. But unquestionably the assertion of Poussin can never be justified on this ground, that “ Raphael was an ass compared with the ancients, although he “ was an angel compared with the moderns”. With respect to those moderns, others may have spoken in a different language. It has been said, that his figures were not grouped by lights and shadows. And if that observation were always true, yet they are so ingeniously grouped by their actions, that every effect is obtained in the pleasure with which they are beheld.

The resemblance, which we have mentioned between Apelles and Raphael in one talent of their art, may be carried into various other circumstances, which will at least afford gratification to the curious, if they do not afford any further ground on which we may reason. Never were two characters born in distant ages and countries with a more striking similarity of talents in the same profession, and in stages of that profession more strongly alike under each, than those two artists. Both of them came

forward, when the arts had been brought by successive stages to considerable celebrity in their respective countries, and after periods of progress pretty nearly equal on both sides. If in Greece it had employed four hundred and fifty years to conduct the pencil from its first attempts to its powers under Apelles; it took up as nearly as possible the same length of time in the modern world from its revival in Florence to the age of Raphael. Or if, in another view, from its more advantageous appearance in Panæus, and under its first regular patronage by Pericles, it reached Apelles in something less than a century and a half; may we not reckon with much exactness the same period in its progress to Raphael from the first academy at Florence, and its first access to the protection of the Medici?

In that progress it had risen by degrees, both in Greece and Italy, to various improvements, which were differently possessed by different masters. It had been enlarged, enlightened, and liberalized in both countries by the elements of learning and science infused into its studies; in Greece by Pamphilus, the immediate master of Apelles, in Italy by Leonardo da Vinci, whose works became, in fact, a master to Raphael.

Of those various professional talents Apelles might possess some less eminently than they appeared in others: he himself acknowledged his inferiority to Amphion in ordonnance, and to Asclepiodorus in proportions. And neither did truth forbid the like acknowledgement to have been made by Raphael, nor was his modesty backward to make it, in some points, and with respect to one or two artists who were then running along with him in the career of fame.

But if others were greater in individual points of the art, it was the singular character of both Apelles and Raphael, that their general and almost universal greatness was beyond every possible pretension of others*. By that general greatness the compositions of the former attained the power of opening ideas beyond not only what was visible on the canvas, but what might be considered as paintable†, if that expression may be used. And it has been already remarked, how pregnant with that extraordinary talent were the compositions of the latter. From that general greatness flowed the supreme grace, which was conceived to have been vouchsafed by heaven to the Grecian master: and what else was that same grace, so new to the experience of the modern world, but the gift of heaven to the illustrious Italian?

Thus were their characters and fame very strongly correspondent in their lives. And the similarity of circumstances, which had led to that character and fame in each, did not cease on their death to follow the character and fortune of their art in their respective countries. It has been shewn already that, after Apelles, the painters of Greece hardly made any progress in art which could be spoken of as new and original; although many arose who were eminent in various ways, yet they shone but with borrowed lustre; if we go to the latest period of time, before we can be allowed by all to speak of a minor-age, we cannot go lower than Euphranor, who was forty years later than Apelles, and yet he was by no means original in the grandeur of style and symmetry for which he was distinguished. In like manner

* Felib. V. i. p. 215, 216.

† Pliny, lib. 35. c. 10.

a kind of pause took place in the profession of art, after Raphael, as if she had been weary of her own prodigious growth, and could go on no longer to maintain it's vigour. At the distance of half a century after him, the Carachi indeed appeared; but eminent as they were, they were minors in character to him*; for while they sought his design, which in fact they attained only in outline, and not in it's refined and deeper spirit, they did not reach his nature, and they lost their own colouring. Where shall we find an artist in a subsequent period, who stood on the same ground with Raphael? Was it Domenichino? Was it Rubens?

If Raphael was so unequally followed by those who came after him, the adverse circumstances of public affairs, which succeeded at Rome soon after his death, did not mend the situation of the arts. In A. D. 1527, that city fell into the hands of the duke of Bourbon, who had besieged it at the head of the Imperial army. The consternation, with which all ingenious men were overwhelmed, was hardly less severe than the destruction brought on the works of ingenuity. It is said, that greater destruction had not been committed there by the Goths and Vandals†. We may suppose indeed that the German part of the army, who were mostly Lutherans, and bitter against Rome, would be little inclined to spare whatever had affinity to the Romish religion. All the artists appear to have fled, except the calm Parmegiano‡, who was surprized by the soldiers, like Protogenes at Rhodes, with the pencil in his hand—themselves more thunder-struck than he by the event. Even Italy could hardly afford those

* Felib. V. 3. p. 265, 281, 283, 284.

† Guicciard. lib. 18.

Memoires du Bellay, lib. 7.

‡ Felib. V. 2. p. 115.

artists a better asylum than Rome: Florence however had then or very soon afterwards no asylum for them, as we have seen: they could only hope to gain one in France, or Germany, or England. A plague too raged at the same moment not only in Rome, but at a considerable distance from it, which depressed every thing, and covered with despair those whom it did not destroy.

It was the lot of Clement VII. to see those public misfortunes, and also the better days which followed them. Happily for the arts, he succeeded to the pontificate in twenty months after it had been conferred on Adrian VI. whose reign, short as it was, saw almost every artist starved*; and had it continued much longer, it would probably have been as fatal to works of taste and ingenuity as any event which had ever befallen them†. When they had recovered themselves under Clement VII. and were again placed in tranquility, it will be a proper moment to take a view of the disciples of Raphael, who then went on with those designs of their master, which they had been employed to finish, or with others of their own.

At the head of those disciples stood Julio Romano, who was generally considered as the first painter in Rome after the death of Raphael‡, notwithstanding the pretensions of Fra Bastiano, who disputed precedence with him, and perhaps had it among his own party; but how vainly, was manifested when he had not Michael Angelo at his side§. The point of character, by which the pencil of Julio Romano is distinguished, was that of great

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 330.

† Ibid. p. 320, 321. Felib. V. 2. p. 143.

‡ Vafari, V. 2. p. 333. Felib. V. 2. p. 180. § Felib. V. 2. p. 205—213.

fire combined with a strong poetic vein. But the effects of that character were differently seen in two different periods, and therefore in those different periods must be viewed.

While his master was living, or while he himself was engaged, after Raphael's death, in compleating the designs which that artist had left unfinished, his pencil, though connected with his fire of constitution, was all chaste and gracious like that of Raphael. The master was conspicuous in the disciple. That fire was so soft, and that vein of poetic fancy was so graceful, that it might have been doubted in some instances, whether the hand of Raphael, or that of Julio, had been employed. But when the natural bent of his own mind was left free to it's own indulgence, it took wing at once: like a river, which had long been restrained in it's course, and at last had broken a passage for itself, it lost it's wonted evenness of flow, it became violent and rapid, it conveyed to his pencil a more abrupt strength, and an animation more severe. Perhaps he was then more expressive, but he was more extraordinary and less natural than either Raphael, or himself in Raphael's days. The fact is, he was so engrossed by his poetic fire, that in order to follow it's conceptions at an equal pace, he was contented with a plan of design which was rapid, and if it was not busied about the graces, it gave the full expression which he wanted. Such, at least, were his designs. In his finished paintings, indeed, that fire appeared somewhat softened by the progress of their execution, and by the leisure with which his judgment was enabled to contemplate what he had designed*. Vafari has considered this circumstance as deciding

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 331. Felib. V. 2. p. 148, 198.

the superiority of Julio's designs, and Felibien considers it as advantageous to his finished pieces.

In this view of his talents, they were certainly very congenial with those of Michael Angelo, and one might have thought that he had come from the school of that master. In none of those, who actually did come from that school, was the fire of poetic spirit and grandeur of conception, which distinguished that great master, more highly and constitutionally displayed. So far as Michael Angelo had drawn from the antiques, Julio Romano had also availed himself of the same sources, which were conspicuous in his style, and in the profound learning with which his works were enriched. At the same time, in the grandeur of his conceptions it was enough for him that he had come from the school of Raphael.

The salutary influences of that school were abundantly manifested in all his compositions. Whatever came from his pencil came from the hand of a philosopher, and was formed on the principle of a philosophic address to the mind. In the arrangement of his subjects, and in the style of his figures, there was a grandeur which well became the disciple of Raphael. Every thing was seen in its proper place; every character became the part allotted to it; and there was no confusion in the whole, nor annoyance in any portion; the figures were never so numerous as to create embarrassment, nor so few as to leave a void which might indicate a poverty of invention. In the exercise of that invention, after the example of his great master, every object and every action was chastely referable to an unity of intention, which was no less maintained where divers actions formed separ-

ate pictures growing out of one and the same subject, than in a single composition. His works at Mantua, where he was more free to follow the scope of his own genius, and particularly his fall of the giants, and history of Psyche, will abundantly vindicate these observations*.

Nevertheless that great disciple must not be considered as equal to the man under whom he had been formed. If his peculiar fire should be thought a superior vein of talent†, yet in other respects he must not be ranked with Raphael; not merely because in his general powers he came after that great master, and derived them in fact from his example, but because he wanted that supreme grace which his master possessed, and also that simplicity of nature, so beautiful in all the works of Raphael, which Julio had overlooked by pursuing too impetuously the fire of his nature, and too implicitly the study of the ancient bas-reliefs. In that study his master had shewn him a better lesson, at least after the practice of some years, by stopping where he ought, by taking as much as gave spirit, and elegance, and dignity to the pencil, and leaving the rest to the sculptor, remembering that nature was a school never to be forsaken by his own art for many of its important attributes, which do not enter into the composition of sculpture.

If the colouring of Raphael was not one of his best talents, that of Julio Romano was one of his worst, and especially as he grew older. The latter has given no proofs of his understanding the

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 335—337. Felib. V. 2. p. 196, 197.

† Ibid. V. 1. p. 254.

claro obscuro, which the former did certainly study with more attention in his later works, and left some examples of it, as well as of colours, in his picture of St. John and in some portraits, which were worthy of admiration. The drapery of the master, which must ever be connected with the grandeur of figures, was after some of his first essays extremely fine in it's disposition: that of the disciple must be passed over in silence. In the airs of his heads the latter was extremely negligent, and he never sought to get out of sameness, the consequence of being attached to the ancient bas-reliefs; those of the former were noble and infinitely varied, in consequence of his having attentively studied the truth and diversity only to be found in nature. In short, with all the greatness of talent in Julio Romano, this general discrimination may be drawn between him and Raphael, that the latter rose with years and experience into more universal powers, while the former as he grew older became more confined in his execution.

Polidore, another of Raphael's disciples, was not considered to stand on equal ground with Julio Romano, most probably because the towering spirit of Julio's poetic fire contributed not only to cover his own defects, but to obscure the advantages of others. And yet there was in many respects a great resemblance between them, arising from sources very similar, though not altogether the same. The genius of Polidore was warmed by strong and animated conceptions, if not by poetic fire, and his style of design was formed on the closest study of antique works. That design was therefore great and severe in both, in both it was new and extraordinary in it's expression. So it appeared in Polidore, notwithstanding it was more chastened in him than

in Julio by the study of nature, which he never neglected. The prevalence of the antiques was nevertheless great, and gave him not only a predilection for those subjects which are most remarkable in ancient bas-reliefs, such as battles, sacrifices, vases, trophies, and other ornaments, but a habit of painting in the manner of bas-relief from his own invention.

In other respects he certainly possessed advantages which were not seen in Julio Romano. The airs of his heads were all noble and expressive, and finely varied; his draperies were grand and well disposed; and all his attitudes were easy and well chosen. But he was almost the first painter of the Roman school, who saw the necessity of the *claro obscuro* in his art, and cultivated it as a principle. The great masses of lights and shadows in his paintings shew how important he considered that repose, which they afford to the eyes of beholders, and that effect which they give to the whole. In the decorations in fresco, which he was fond of painting on the fronts of buildings, his objects were grouped so artfully, and so well assisted by the lights and shadows which he obtained from two colours, or in fact from one, the better to imitate the ancient bas-reliefs, that nothing could be more beautiful. The way in which he produced those lights and shadows was very simple, and yet very effectual. Nothing can effect a greater deception of nature, and of course a greater relief, or what may be called, if correctly drawn, a true *fac simile* of any object, than either white upon a black ground, or dark local colours upon a ground that is white. In those imitations of bas-reliefs, with which Polidore filled the frizes and other parts of his frontispieces, he laid a coat of white paint upon a coat of black, and then taking off the uppermost coat with an

iron bodkin as he drew the shape of the object, the black which became apparent served as a strong shadow to the figure, wherever it was wanted.

So he employed himself, most agreeably to his own mind, after Raphael was dead. In so doing he abandoned the field of competition for his master's fame, if in the best scope of his art that fame could have become the portion of him, whose pencil, although it were more natural and better regulated in many respects than Julio Romano's, yet equally wanted those refined graces which had made Raphael immortal.

Among the disciples of that great man, Pierino del Vaga had a considerable name. In his compositions there was something of every thing valuable in his profession, and above all others a most striking preservation of the character of Raphael's design, which was never lost in his latest pieces. But if those disciples whom we have mentioned wanted the graces of that master, Pierino was equally deficient in the profound philosophy of his spirit. That refined interior of his characters this disciple never reached. It was only the outline and external character which he had caught, and caught indeed with success. The mind of Raphael was not there. In that respect, Pierino only failed where other celebrated names failed after him. If we except that circumstance, his talents in design, and particularly of the human figure, were of the first rate*; and those subjects of grandeur from the old and new Testament, which were executed by him in the Vatican, might have come very properly from

• Vafari, V. 2. p. 355.

his own design, if we had not been assured that he was at least assisted in those designs by Raphael, or rather that they were wholly afforded him by that master*. Those subjects were no puny ones, nor fit for the disciples of every school; they were “the passage of the river Jordan”—“the fall of the walls of Jericho”—“the battle in which Joshua commanded the sun to stand still”—“our Saviour’s nativity, baptism, and last supper”.

Admitting that Pierino in any works of his own came ever so short of his illustrious master in the more refined expression of his art, we meet with few who have risen to the capacity of embracing so much of Raphael’s style by dint of plodding labour, and from so low and unpromising a beginning as Pierino experienced. His character, however, will demand the first place in the ornamental and decorative parts of painting. No man was a greater master than he in the invention which was put to dress either pictures or apartments with the devices which most naturally became and enriched them. In that branch of his art he had no equal, unless it were Giovanni de Udine†. These two were very useful disciples to Raphael, and rose to the first reputation in that excellence. They shew us nevertheless that so far as we may look for the spirit of that master in them, it was not transmitted by their pencils in those things which constituted the divine part of his professional character. Whatever they or any others of his disciples had gathered from him disappeared with those disciples by the middle of the sixteenth century, and left a vacancy in the art‡, which was but ill supplied by the pretensions that next succeeded.

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 355. Felib. V. 2. p. 217.
Vafari, V. 3. p. 32.—35, 87.

† Ibid. p. 243, 244.

‡ Felib. V. 3. p. 259. V. 4. p. 190.

If novelty and boldness in those pretensions were competent to fill that vacuity, then was it filled by two artists who stepped forth, new in manner, though each was a contrast to the other, and equally bold to bear all things down by their own confidence; equal too in maturing another evil, not easily eradicated, of converting the zeal of art into a flame of war. The persons to whom we allude were Michael Angelo da Caravaggio, and Gioseppe d'Arpino, sometimes called by contraction Gioseppino.

This last was a mannerist, of a most singular kind, formed by his own capricious imagination*, and independant of any precise ideas which had come from any school of arts in the world. If he did not abandon the rules of art, the study of nature, and whatever was to be learnt from the antiques, he sat very loose from their guidance. On the neglect of all three he formed to himself a manner, which may be more easily conceived than described, and the success of which he probably calculated from the *dulce est desipere* so prevalent in human nature, from the reluctance with which many, and indeed all of shallower minds, will be tied to principles in all ages of art, and from the preference which many even of better abilities will have for latitude and scope. That he had genius, is true, without which he must have failed; at the same time it is impossible that a manner so strangely taken up should not have been prompted at bottom by great vanity, elated too much with success, and by that instability of mind which becomes discontented with every thing by turns, but which there is very seldom temerity enough in a painter to indulge, unless popular favour shall have put the world at his feet. Such

* Felib. V. 3. p. 259, 302.

was in truth the case with the artist of whom we are speaking* ; and it was a disgrace to the age and the country, which had so raised him above himself, and even cherished his extravagance of mind. It must be observed, nevertheless, that his earlier works were not charged with that capriciousness of spirit. In the old hall of the Swifs, where he gave the first great essay of his pencil by painting in *claro obscuro* " Sampson carrying " away the gates of Gaza" ; and even afterwards in the Capitol, where he painted " the battle between the Romans and the " Sabines", the best piece that came from his hands, there was nothing of that superficial and degenerated manner, into which he sunk when he thought that he stood highest.

Caravaggio moved in a quite opposite extreme. He pursued nature alone, but as much too closely as the other deviated from her. It was that pursuit of nature, which, as far as it had influence, counteracted all that had been studied by the ancients, and by the best moderns before him. For he took her with all her faults, and just as he found her†. He had no notion but of nature in her commonest form. He did not so much consider what would make his pictures or his objects fine, as what would make his representation strong. His invention was therefore necessarily poor ; his ideas of design were of the humblest kind, and as defective as his notions of decorum in composition. In short, he was a matter of fact painter, groveling in the *bathos* of his art, rising to no sentiment, emulating no style, and careless about any other expression of character than was contained in the external figure. So poor and imbecil did his mind become

* Felib. V. 3. p. 309, 310.

† Ibid. p. 259, 302. V. 4. p. 193.

by those habits of practice, and so enslaved to the mere figure before him, that he could do nothing without a model.

If in those circumstances he was conscious of any defects, yet he conceived that they were abundantly compensated by a peculiar strength and management of colouring, new indeed in his hands, which gave the truth of the object with a most forcible effect. This he accomplished by a new *claro obscuro* drawn from a laborious study of strong local colours. His lights were all thrown in from above, direct and full upon the object*: his shadows were deep and dark, encircling that object. Thus a wonderful relief was obtained, and a force was given to the whole, which approached to the terrible. In that practice there was of course great sameness in all that he did, and a complete sacrifice of propriety, grace, and nobleness, as well as of variety, in the adjustment, the attitudes, and the draperies of his figures. But if those advantages were sacrificed, the labour of executing them, and the possible disgrace of executing them ill, were saved; all that was nice and difficult in the art was rendered useless, where the veil of night was in fact spread in the depth of the shadows. If those, or any other advantages of execution, appeared in any of his works, they were done before he fell into that new manner, of which he was proud to be considered the author.

By the novel pretensions of those two artists the meridian of Rome was, in fact, divided; they who overlooked all that was dark, severe, and terrible for the stronger illustration of objects, siding with Caravaggio; and they who thought that an atten-

* Felib. V. 3. p. 259, 302. V. 4. p. 193.

tion to the rules of art and also to nature was a clog to the scope of genius, becoming the partizans of Arpino*.

Here we cannot help stopping to ask a question. How deranged and subdued must have been those refined notions of art, with which Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo Buonaroti, and Raphael had possessed the country, and of which they had left so many admirable examples? What a strange revolution must have taken place in the minds of men, within so short a compass of time, when, with those and a thousand other fine examples before them, they could suffer themselves to be divided on the question of standard-excellence between the works of one man, who professed to attend neither to nature nor design, and those of another who substituted for grace all that was hard and severe, and for grandeur a mere forcible effect?

Imagine a human figure breaking forth from the darkness of Erebus, every thing black around it, but itself illuminated in full contrast to it's gross inclosure. You have a Caravaggio, without his pencil. To give an instance yet more close in it's application. Imagine a female of plain and ordinary form, with coarser features, presented in the deepest mourning of art. Imagine also the elegant and beautiful form of some nymph, gracefully dressed, and presented to the view in chearful light, with what relief may be given to her from a more lively surrounding scene. Which of those two would you contemplate with more comprehensive satisfaction?† Let those pictures be reversed, and let there be given to the beautiful form that cloathing of ambient darkness. Would

* Felib. V. 3. p. 302.

† Ibid. V. 4. p. 194, 195.

it then appear equally attracting? would you prefer it to the *tout ensemble* of the plainer form possessed of the other's chearful light? The darker scene would probably push forth it's figure with more force: but is force all that the mind or the eye requires from the pencil, although it's traits were mellow? Judging between these two cases, any man may decide for himself whether Caravaggio's manner was an improvement in the art; whether it was worthy to put Raphael and all the great masters out of fight. As to the effect of Arpino's manner, no exemplification is necessary to form a judgment of that which professed not to be guided either by the principles of art or the simplicity and truth of nature.

If those partizans on either side had been actuated purely by a zeal for improved art, still it was to be lamented that they had not embraced pretensions more worthy to engage them. But they were inflamed in their passions as well as divided in their sentiments: they broke out into those heats and animosities, which in every society may often have proceeded from thinking differently, but which can never be less natural than when they are fomented by works of taste, from whence a refined pleasure, and that pleasure only ought to flow.'

With respect to the two principal antagonists, one can hardly read of their professional progress without supposing that they carried swords in their hands instead of pencils, (which, in fact, they did too often, and especially Caravaggio) and that they had come to Rome in order to overturn the government, rather than to exercise their art. They were not much more desperate against each other than were many of their partizans on either

side. Ecclesiastics, supporting in general the interest of Arpino, were furious against temporal lords and gentry in the opposite cabal ; and these last were no less vehement against the former in support of their favourite Caravaggio. The prejudices and violences on both sides descended more or less into the general classes of the people, as far as they were interested in works of art, and reached almost every situation in the country. Even the young men, who flocked to Rome from other schools, and ranged themselves under the standard of the one or the other of those champions, did not long preserve the tranquility which should never leave their profession, but began to experience very early the truth of what Felibien has asserted as a principle, and a melancholy one, if it were invariably realized, that “ emulation among artists becomes at length unconquerable “ hatred*”.

As we proceed further in the Roman school, we shall see more particularly the mischievous effects of those contentions, how long they continued to tear that school in pieces, and how by the returning influence of a better taste, though never reaching the full standard of Raphael, they became at last extinguished, with all the vain and unworthy pretensions of those two men from whom they had sprung.

At present, however, we must suspend those inquiries, while we take the opportunity, which is given in this place, of making some reflections on that spirit of bitterness and violence, which not only in the instance before us, but in numerous others,

* Felib. V. 4. p. 198.

especially in the modern world, has marked the emulations of artists.

If we would gather from examples the origin of that evil spirit, which has so disturbed the most tranquil of professional walks, and has given the calm and pure emulations of ingenious talents to know all the strife and rancour of the meanest passions, it may be traced to that earlier period, when poor Domenico fell by the ponyard of the ungrateful Andrea del Castagno. The ties of friendship and hospitality, the obligation of being trusted with an important discovery in art, were not sufficient to prevail over the jealousy or avarice, which could not bear another to share in the valuable secret, although that other was the man by whom that secret had been generously imparted. Was not that ungrateful artist rightly stiled "Andrea de gl' impiccati", Andrew the hang-dog? Was he not fitly reserved to paint the conspirators at Florence, so much in his own spirit, although it were a pity that his natural death deprived that Justice-hall of exhibiting the monster in another situation than when he painted its walls?

The horror of that example did not hinder others, equally desperate, from following it in other periods. Peruzzi was poisoned by his competitors. Lucas of Leyden met the same fate, it is said, from an artist of Flushing who was jealous of his merit, and at an entertainment to which he had been invited by his destroyer. Baroccio, precisely in the same circumstance at Rome, received from his malicious competitors the dose, which only lingered to aggravate and prolong the pains of death. Salviati could not bear the reputation of Rosso in France, he became

licentious and bitter in his censures, and then only escaped the destruction, which he had nearly brought upon himself, by quitting that country. The weight of envy, rancour, and persecution by the Neapolitan artists lay so heavy on Domenichino, that he sunk under them as much as if he had fallen by the sword.

Yet were these events of a private nature, compared with the fury of Caravaggio and Arpino. All was uproar and danger: each of them alike increased the general tumult: each of them was a storm in the world of art, which never suffered it to be composed. Arpino, conceiving his professional success to be somewhat annoyed by Annibal Carachi at Rome, offered him a sword, as he met him one day in the street, and bid him to defend himself with it. It is due to the good sense of Annibal to give his answer: taking a pencil out of his pocket, he said, "it is with these arms that I fight, and with these I bid you defiance". Caravaggio was not quite so temperate as Arpino had been in that instance. He actually killed a young man, Tomafino, for having saved Arpino from his sword. Having fled for refuge, and been pardoned, his revenge only became more vehement for having been disappointed. He challenged Arpino, and even went to Malta, to compleat himself as a knight, that his antagonist might no longer object as a cavalier to meet him.

It is no easy matter to find any such examples among the artists of ancient Greece; neither did they so demean themselves, nor were the arts advanced among them by any such measures. No bitter animosities, no painful jealousies, no contentions took place, but the placid and honourable ones which had the culti-

vation of ingenious talents for their object. All their fire was reserved for the display of those talents, not for the gratification of mean and illiberal feelings. When Panæus challenged Timagoras to that public combat of genius, on which Greece was to decide in the temple of Delphi, was ever combat more cordial and pacific? was there any ill jealousy which preceded, or any bitterness which followed, that event? The challenger lost the prize, but he never lost his temper. He thought himself, in fact, a gainer in the issue, inasmuch as his country had gained by that issue a new impulse to ingenuity.

When Polygnotus and Micon were employed at the same time to display their respective powers on different sides of the portico at Athens, did they manifest any portion of that jealousy which arose in similar circumstances between Michael Angelo Buonaroti and Leonardo da Vinci at Florence? or did either of them need the sword and buckler of Pordenone at Venice?

When Apollodorus publicly charged his pupil Zeuxis with theft, did not the handsome point in the distich, which conveyed that charge, shew that it was done in all the pleasantry of good humour, which converted the charge into a compliment no less boastful to the master than flattering to the disciple?—he had stolen not only the skill, but the fame, of his master.

When Zeuxis and Parrhasius exhibited their respective trials of art, was not that done in all the placidness of friendship undisturbed by the decision, nay, cemented indeed by the candour with which that decision was pronounced by one of the parties against himself?

To produce one instance more. Was ever friendship more stedfast than between Apelles and Protogenes? was it not absolutely created by a reciprocal estimation of each other's talents? Nay, the former became the immediate patron of the latter, although the latter was the only man who could stand in competition with himself. He bought Protogenes's pictures at an advanced price, to raise the attention of the world to their author, and to push him into the fame and fortune which were due to his merit.

Such were the noble and generous emulations of ancient artists; exemplified, as their history reports, on common and ordinary occasions. If we look for such examples in modern times, where shall they be found? We mean not to say that moderns are incapable of such generosities, but certainly they are more thinly scattered in the world of modern art. They were seen at Florence in the glorious conduct, which has been already discussed at large, both of candidates and judges, when the designs for the brazen gates of St. John were adopted. And they have done honour to Flanders in the characters of Lucas and Durer—so far the Apelles and Protogenes of modern days—constant competitors and constant friends—strictly emulous, but never jealous, of each other—professedly vying in every new production, on the same subject, in the same branch of art, and as sincerely doing each other justice, and won to a more friendly correspondence by each other's excellence*.

Is it not a shame, that in the very age when those moderns

* *La vie des peintres Flamands*, V. 1. p. 44.

lived, and in the times which have followed them, the names of competitors and friends have been so seldom united among the professors of elegant arts?—that envy, with all its insidious and open opposition, has so commonly been predominant in those who should have been the first to cherish the pure flame of liberal and friendly emulation?—that superior excellence in art, instead of being a mirror in which cotemporary artists might see and study themselves, and measure their own stature of improvement, has so generally become the object of carping censure, wayward hostility, and miscreant combinations to level it with the mass of undistinguished pretenders to fame?

Is this an evidence of declension in the arts? To that question we shall presently give a more direct answer, when we advert to the influences and effects of such a spirit. It is plain, however, that where such a spirit prevails, the profession of art is not prosecuted as it ought to be. It is not the glory of the human mind, or the glory of a country, that is emulated, but the narrower views of personal interest. It is the avidity of gain, or the thirst of professional pride, that is studied more than any thing else. Where such a spirit prevails, the artist, forgetting his first character, and the first recommendations of his profession as a public advantage, in which he should rejoice to see any talents besides his own conspicuously serviceable, is bent on enriching himself, or on gathering exclusive favour to his own pretensions. Hence he can bare no rival, nor will he suffer, if possible, any rival to live and possess an equal reputation. The whole sphere, in which he acts, is unsociable and dark. And the most salutary institution for the concentration and melioration of ingenious talents will become the scene of cabal and in-

trigue for pre-eminence, the meanest and most selfish measures will be found in its administration, and all the good it should do will be lost in bickering and strife.

Is there any thing in the peculiar circumstances of fine art, that should feed an envious and jealous disposition? If there be, let us search it, and let the professor who sustains that unhappy disposition have the benefit of what may be said for him as an artist, although it cannot excuse him as a man, and a member of society.

There is certainly a great difference between the state of patronage in the modern world and that which carried the arts to their high celebrity in ancient Greece: that difference is just as great as the political situation of different countries, or of the same countries in past and present ages. The professor of fine art, in common with all who move in other professions, looks naturally and properly for patronage to his abilities: but the door which opens to it is much wider to all others than to him.

The man of letters reposes himself on that good sense, or that refined intelligence, which is diffused through the world: nor does he ever quarrel with another, merely because that other stands as high as himself in the estimation of the learned, even in his own path of excellence: perhaps those parities of merit, where no special differences of principles arise, are more generally seen to be the bond and cement of amiable and literary society.

The professor of law rises on that universal call for his abilities,

which is ministered by the never-ceasing generation and intercourse of human transactions, and which he knows will evermore sustain and elevate infinite numbers besides himself, in spite of all that he can do or say : his jealousies therefore of others, or his opposition to those who move in his own immediate line, would probably never throw the smallest shade on their situation, nor answer any end but the vexation of his own heart.

The physical and the ecclesiastical man, although both of them perhaps come nearer than many others to that peevishness of spirit, which counts every thing gained by others as so much lost to itself, yet move on so broad a ground, that if one man does in fact stand there in the way of another, the shade is too indistinct to irritate the temper, and the origin of it is too remote or too diffused to be controuled by any schemes of envy or ill nature.

The professor of fine art labours under different circumstances, and experiences patronage in a different measure. It rises to him more limited in it's compass. It is capable of feeding infinitely fewer numbers. And if the number of artists be every where smaller, in fact, than of other professors, yet among the former every individual is a candidate for the same reward. They all seek to gather the same rays of light and warmth : they must all bask in the same local sunshine, or be left in the shade. If to those circumstances nature should add in the individual the spirit of a Diogenes, will he not be as severe and cynical as that philosopher ? Every man that comes across him will intercept his comfort. Of a scanty and confined stock every particle intercepted is a grievous loss. He grudges it ; he cannot bear it.

Malevolence succeeds to disappointment, or even to the fear of it. And should the spirit of a Caravaggio be uppermost, violence will presently become engrafted on ill will : all will be instant uproar.

Thus it is that the world of art, for want of being tempered by those dispositions which are at all times necessary to extract the sting from rivalry, and to render emulation fair and honourable and pleasant, or for want of that patronage which might open a wider field to the efforts of the professor, has too often become a world of strife ; and in countries where that strife might be indulged to a greater extent by the connivance of the civil power, it has sometimes become a field of blood.

But the fine arts can never thrive very much or very long, where such a spirit prevails. With unanimity and an harmonious contribution of abilities for carrying the arts to perfection, great advantages may be gained even where patronage is rare. That patronage will become insensibly extended. Those who have no taste will gather it from professional men. They will gather the zeal of those, who can best display the attractions of art, and whose zeal goes hand in hand with the amiableness of temper. They will come to admire what excites general admiration ; and having fancied in themselves something that is sed agreeably by the taste around them, they will be disposed to nourish the growth of that taste in themselves, and to shed favour and patronage upon it in others. It was by such harmonious efforts of professional men that the fine arts every where gained their first footing, and that flourishing academies grew into existence. It was such a cordial communication and mutual candour, which

produced some of the first standards of art in antiquity. From thence came forth the Laocoon, the united work of three men equally zealous for the perfection of their art, and who have shewn us in that great example how much may be reached, whenever the efforts of human genius are fairly concentrated, and earnestly directed to their object, and when all meaner passions are absorbed in a common zeal to excell.

Reverse the case, and let contradiction, and strife, and malevolent censure occupy the theatre of art, the taste which would otherwise rise in a country is chilled at once. The private gentleman has no encouragement to admire what is elegant, or to promote what he would admire. The progress of the arts is chilled in the very hands of artists, whose genius is unquestionably affected by the consideration that it is sure to be followed by the keen severity and malevolence of cotemporary antagonists. In such a state of things, were would you find three men, all equal in art, like the three Rhodians who formed the Laocoon, to unite in the accomplishment of any great work?

But that is not the only misfortune which flows from a bitterness of contention. It entails on the arts as well as on their professors an opprobrium not easily to be removed. When we see those professors indulging a common rapine on each others talents, or each others fame, we forget that the arts which they profess are arts of elegance; the painter or sculptor sinks into the mere mechanic, who abuses the commodities of his neighbours in the same trade, looks with anger on their gains, and has no other object but the low and wretched one of bringing every customer to his own shop, by every misrepresentation of others.

These reflexions, we trust, will not be applied further than they are meant to go. It must be acknowledged, that in all periods of modern art there have been many amiable characters, who have supported their profession with dignity, and have given eminent examples of generosity towards their contemporaries. In our own country, as well as in any other, those amiable characters have appeared, and do still appear; nor has the instance of Vandyke been a solitary one, that he saw with unjaundiced eyes the merit of Dobson, by the accidental view of one of his pictures, that he sought him out, and cherished him, introduced him to favour, and raised him in his profession. We know that in all moments there have been others capable of feeling as liberally, and of doing as much: but it cannot be said, that in any moment there have been none incapable of those feelings.

 ROME.

CHAP. IV.

The degradation of Roman art felt by the Carachi at Bologna—the two brothers are induced to go to Rome—their professional characters previous to that removal, and it's subsequent effects on their pencils—in what respects they fell short of the standard-excellence of Raphael—their qualified style more palatable to the declining taste of their time—that declension not remedied by the first academy of arts established under the sanction of Gregory XIII.—the bad taste which had prevailed overthrown, nevertheless, by the works of the Carachi, and by the paintings of Guido at Rome—the general character of declension very little interrupted after the Carachi—Salvator Rosa, Claud Lorrain, and Nicholas Poussin considered as Roman artists, and the character of their respective landships—another novelty of manner, and it's influence, introduced by Pietro da Cortona—the sculptures of Bernini—those of Il Fiamingo—Andrea Sacchi—a further novelty of manner, and it's influence, introduced by Carlo Maratti—the spirit of art pursued by others in the seventeenth century—the general result of declining circumstances in that century—the state of Roman art from the commencement of the present century, under Bianchin—Benedetto Benefiali—Sir Antonio Raphael Mengs.—Pompeio Battoni—Gavin Hamilton—and Dorno—engraving—architecture—the spirit and progress of patronage at Rome.

THE Carachi, flourishing in their school at Bologna, saw the evils which were hastening on the arts at Rome by the equally shallow and desperate pretensions of the two rival-artists Caravaggio and Arpino, and their no less furious followers. They saw those evils in the abuse of taste conspicuous in some productions of those painters, which had been brought to Bologna, as well as in all the accounts which report had given of the distracted state of their profession in Rome: for at that time none of the Carachi had ever seen that city. It could not be without indignation that they, who sought, as much as ever men sought, the great excellencies of their profession from the pure love of it, and without the intervention of any other feeling than the pursuit of excellence, beheld those circumstances which were daily degrading all that they lived to see exalted*. They frequently lamented before their disciples the sad reverse which their art had undergone in so short a period after the school of Raphael, and the misfortune of seeing the great meridian of Rome divided by the poor pretensions of those, who with so much temerity had placed themselves at the head of their profession.

It is not improbable, that these considerations might first suggest to the Carachi the idea of visiting Rome, and especially to Annibal, who was not only of a more sanguine disposition, and bolder in his spirit both as an artist and a man, but who was then the first man in the world to go forth by his own strength, and to rescue his art from the wreck to which it was exposed.

* Felib. V. 4. p. 191—193.

That moment too must have appeared the most favourable of any that had ever occurred for indulging the thought of carrying their art to Rome, if ever that thought had been previously indulged. They were provincial masters, although they were great men. The brothers Augustin and Annibal had been brought up under Lewis their cousin at Bologna, or they had finished their studies by the works of those great masters in Lombardy, particularly of Coreggio and Titian, which were more easy to their access*. And Lewis himself continued all his life a master in his native Bologna, where he had been first a pupil. But the idea of being a provincial master, although in the first rank of character, has not always sat contentedly on great minds. It is natural for such to entertain the wish of shining in that meridian where men shine most. They cannot; or they may conceive that they cannot, otherwise make a proper estimate of themselves, than by trying their powers, and their own conspicuousness, comparatively with others who move in the first circles of fame. This is the natural impulse of an honourable ambition, and might probably be felt by Annibal, although with the most active mind he knew as little of ambition as any man of great talents ever did, and less than most other men of the ambition which is mean and little†. There is no room to doubt, that when he went to Rome, he was urged to that migration by the love of his profession, and by the honour of his art, which he saw labouring under the worst disadvantages, as much as by any views which were personal to himself. In addition to those motives, he felt in common with his brother and his cousin an earnest desire of consulting those

* Felib. V. 3. p. 260, 261, 263, 280.

† Ibid. p. 274.

antiques, and those works of Michael Angelo and Raphael, which had made Rome the resort of all who were emulous of fame in the arts*.

While the Carachi were deliberating on these things at Bologna, an invitation by cardinal Edward Farnese decided at once their measures. Annibal embraced the call, and went to paint that cardinal's palace, leaving Augustin and Lewis to keep up the academy. The former of these was not left long behind. He went and assisted his brother for some time at Rome, and then separated to exercise his profession for duke Ranuccio at Parma, where he died. After that, Lewis went on the solicitation of Annibal to assist him in the Farnese-palace, where he staid a very short time, and then returned home to the care of his school. Whatever may concern that school, or the professional character of the Carachi at Bologna, shall be considered when we come to view the arts in that situation. We shall now confine ourselves to speak of those artists as connected with Rome, and more particularly of Annibal, concerning whom we shall have little or nothing to say hereafter, his connexion with Rome being the most pointed one in his life.

When this man, and his brother Augustin, came to that great meridian, we must consider their pencils as formed by an attachment to those works which had struck them most forcibly in Lombardy, and which could not fail indeed to produce a very controuling attachment in minds, whose views of art had been rather confined. It was fortunate that the examples which they

* Felib. V. 3. p. 264.

had studied from Coreggio at Parma, and from Titian at Venice, were worthy to produce that attachment. On those combined examples they had formed a manner, which arose naturally from those studies, and which was seen with hardly any other difference between them both* than was produced by the diversity of their tempers and spirits. That of Annibal was marked by his bolder and more adventurous vein, while that of Augustin spoke a mind more cautious and more studious too. In consequence of those studies, the pencils of both were soft and mellow, natural, easy, and agreeable. Their colouring was what might be expected in Lombardy†, and what naturally resulted from the works to which they had attended, although both that and their *claro obscuro* might have been better: and it was impossible that from those works their design should not have gained some conceptions of a greater taste, although they may be said to have seen no antiques, unless the little collection which they had been able to make for the use of their school, consisting more in casts than in originals, might be considered as such.

In the hands of Annibal that design, although **not** correct‡, for neither Coreggio nor Titian were standards of correctness, became by the force of his spirit expressive of much in very little. It consisted of few strokes well chosen. He knew how to take the visible character in every object, and that character he employed with great sense and judgment.

* Felib. V. 3. p. 263.

† Ibid. p. 182, 265, 282.

‡ Ibid. p. 281, 282.

When he arrived at Rome, the first thing he did was to visit the antiques, wherever they were deposited*. They went beyond all his ideas. The grandeur, beauty, and correctness of design, and the fine taste of nature, displayed in those works, affected him with feelings not more new than delightful. He studied them attentively, and every energy of his mind was bent on transplanting their excellencies into his own pencil. He next betook himself to contemplate those great works of Michael Angelo and Raphael, which had grown, in fact, out of those antiques. To the former he appears to have been cautious of attaching himself by an indiscriminate admiration, choosing for his guidance what was admirable and fine in that master, and leaving what he conceived to be dry, and perhaps affected, or extravagant†. As to Raphael, he made no hesitation to conclude that there needed no qualification in taking him for the guide and great exemplar of his art‡. To the works of that master he therefore devoted himself for the future government of his pencil.

His mind became so opened by the new perfections before him, that he changed very much the manner which he had pursued in Lombardy, although Coreggio and Titian had stood at its source§. Perhaps the greatest sacrifice, which those new perfections created, was in that point of art for which he had been indebted to Titian as a colourist||. He saw the precious exaltation of style, to which design had been carried, and he heard nothing but its eulogies in the Roman school: like

* Felib. V. 3. p. 265, 281.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid. p. 283, 284.

all others therefore who had come to that school, he devoted himself to that radical foundation of his art ; and, like those who had stood highest there, he preferred the study of a fine nature to that of a fine colour*. There was no necessity indeed for the one to have been neglected, while the other was pursued ; but, like all other men whose minds are ever filled with one object, he could not find an equal attention to be bestowed on another. That which has been left subordinate in our view, will remain subordinate. It is nevertheless true, that the two powers of art, of which we are now speaking, are not easily combined with perfection in one and the same subject. It is not always that a beauty of colours can be brought to accord with an exact imitation of nature, in which there are many half tints, lights, shadows, and reflexions, by no means agreeable. It is also certain, that if the perfection of design is to be displayed, local colours do not help it. At any rate, the choice embraced by Annibal gave that elevation to his name, which would never have attended it, if he had not seen Rome.

Under these circumstances we now come to behold Annibal Caracci established in his profession there—the avowed admirer of the antiques, of Michael Angelo, and of Raphael most of all. As things then stood, when every excellence of art had been long degenerating, it was a new and advantageous epoch which he gave to that meridian, although in fact it did but bring back what had been seen before, nor even so much. He was considered as the restorer of his art in the Roman school‡. And yet when we come to view him with truth, that restoration

* Felib. V. 3. p. 265, 281, 283, 284.

† Ibid. p. 282.

‡ Ibid. p. 280.

must be qualified. Neither the spirit of the antiques, nor that of Michael Angelo, nor that of Raphael, was reached by his pencil. Their grandeur of outline indeed he attained, and fully embraced; but that more profound interior of character, that refined philosophy of art, that divine spirit addressed to the imagination, which distinguished their expression, he did not reach, nor was he equal to reach it. Annibal was no philosopher, nor accustomed to deep thinking and reflexion; the education he had received was too scanty to enure him to much study; he had by nature a very strong mind, which though unlearned will apprehend some things quickly, and make great attainments, but with which they who have been trained in habits of studious investigation will best embrace all that concerns philosophy.

Neither was that more refined spirit of art attained by his brother Augustin, who was a philosopher, had obtained a most liberal education, and, in fact, studied and thought for both the other Caracci, but at least for Annibal, in the compositions of all his works. And one reason why he did not reach that spirit of art is enough: he did not make it his regular study; the burine divided at least his time and thoughts with the pencil; he was an engraver from the school of Cornelius Cort at Venice before he appeared as a painter, and he continued to engrave as much as to paint.

The style then, which was formed by these men at Rome, embraced all the essential properties of a fine, correct, and great outline of character, an energy of expression, an engaging selection of nature, and a graciousness in the execution of the

whole, which were so strikingly impressive in the works they had studied, and which were more level to the general sensations of beholders than those profounder and more refined penetrations into sentiment and spirit, which are addressed to the mind, and can only be apprehended by minds that think deeply. These last they left unessayed; and in so doing, perhaps, they had more success with that age than if they had striven to rise to all the philosophy of their art. A style, which did not go beyond the perfections of visible character, and of those powers which are distinguished by the name of mechanical, was likelier in all probability to become popular in an age so sensibly falling into declension as that was, than one which was divine in its composition, and whose more refined effects, lying deeper than any surface, were not to be gathered by the eye of the body, but by that of the mind matured and trained to so exquisite a sensation. So far therefore their style was fortunate in being qualified. And that qualified taste in the public, by which it became easily adopted, has continued ever since so partial to the style which is qualified, that the Roman school has seen or encouraged little else, the name of the Carachi has almost obscured that of Raphael, and their spirit of art has continued to be admired, where his has been lost to notice.

It was not merely from the poor and hungry manner of the two rival-artists at Rome, but from the imbecility of every school which had risen up after the days of Raphael or his disciples, that the character of declension had been gradually creeping on the arts. The school of Sabbatini at Rome, that of Passignani at Florence, and those of Prospero Fontana and of Passerotti at Bologna, took the lead soon after those days of

Raphael's disciples, and were very much on a par in the mediocrity of their character*. Not long after the time of Sabbatini, nor long before the arrival of the Carachi at Rome, the benefits of an academy, and the first which Roman art had seen, were provided and established under the protection of Gregory XIII. by the private munificence of Frederic Zuccherò and Mutiano, who endowed it with all that they were worth†. But that institution either came too late to regenerate that exalted spirit of art which was then gone by, or it might be predicted from the professional character of its founders, what probability there was of that spirit being regenerated by the plans and energies of their instructions.

Let us now follow the Carachi, and particularly Annibal, into that Farnese palace, which he was called from Bologna to decorate. He began in the chapel with "the Canaanite at the feet of Christ". He made the walls of the palace eloquent in "moral allegories". He went through "the labours of Hercules"—forely realized in his own person, when we shall come to see how that patronage of the cardinal ended; for eight toilsome years in the best part of Annibal's life were consumed on those works, besides the labours which his brother and cousin had occasionally expended thereon in conjunction with himself. It was in those works that the standard of his character was fixed; there he shewed the effects of those determinations which he had embraced on coming within the verge of the Roman school. In every part of those works his design and his execu-

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 234. *Felib.* V. 3. p. 317.

† *Felib.* V. 3. p. 316. *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 25, 177.

tion was admirable. As Nicholas Pouffin declared of them, the very ornaments with which the compartments were filled surpassed every thing of the kind which had ever come from other pencils, and in the subjects themselves he had surpassed every thing that ever came from his own*.

We may suppose that the bad taste then prevalent at Rome, which had contributed to draw him from Bologna, did not longer gain ground in the presence of such a master. He conducted himself with great discretion, but in a sure way to triumph at last. To the subversion of all principles in Arpino he had but to oppose what charms of correctness and elegance he had acquired both in design and in nature. To the rigid exactness of Caravaggio, in following what was before him however defective, he had but (as he himself said†) to oppose a fine choice of what was beautiful and pleasing: to the strong and furious colouring of that artist he needed but to bring in opposition the soft, the tender, and the graceful; to the contractedness of his lights, the full and open air; and to his industry in hiding the critical part of his works under the dark shades of night, the broad face of day, which would throw a more cheerful illumination over the whole. By those means he broke in so much upon the bad taste which had prevailed, that it was proposed to destroy some paintings of those artists in the church of the Jesuits, and to have their places supplied by others from the hand of Annibal‡.

Guido, feeling all the ardour of his master for the recovery.

* Felib. V. 3. p. 282. † Ibid. V. 4. p. 192, 193. ‡ Ibid. V. 3. p. 275.

of a better taste, went from Bologna to Rome. He was determined to put Caravaggio out of countenance on his own pursuit of nature. Guido's heads were the best parts of his compositions, and if ever Caravaggio's manner appeared to most advantage, it was in throwing out the natural force of single figures. But Guido's strength in the natural was constituted as differently as possible from the other's. He not only made a fine choice of his subject, which Caravaggio never studied, but the natural excellence of his choice was manifested by peculiar touches given to particular parts, which produced a most beautiful sentiment. The sentimental and the pathetic best suited his turn of mind; and there the beautiful came forth astonishingly from those peculiarly tender strokes of his pencil. There was a loveliness in the mouth, something between seriousness and a smile, with a peculiar modesty in the eyes, which were most fitted to express tranquility or resignation of any thing that ever came from a pencil. Thus with the most exquisite softness and grace, peculiar to himself, he produced the natural. He became therefore an excellent rival to Caravaggio. Each contended for a strong nature, the one with attractive grace, the other with great severity.

But before Guido entered the lists with these natural powers of his pencil, he had a desire to overcome Caravaggio, if possible, with his own weapons. And he did so, confessedly, in "the martyrdom of St. Peter", for cardinal Borghese*. In that picture, executed in the strong and dark manner of Caravaggio, he gave a nobleness of disposition, and an excellence of design,

* Ecclib. V. 4. p. 197.

with which that manner had never been associated before. From that instance, and some others which might follow it, most probably arose the idea which some have entertained, that Guido at first took up Caravaggio's manner, but afterwards left it for a better. So far it is true, that he took it up for a particular purpose, and laid it down when it had answered that purpose, which was to shew it's imperfections. He then came forward with his own grace and softness of style*. On that field the manner, which he was bent to oppose, became more compleatly overthrown. Yet as prejudices are seldom eradicated at once, the partizans of that manner rallied and struggled for a time, and the sword of Caravaggio was often ready to do it's part towards vindicating it's master†.

Having succeeded, as Guido conceived, in his great object, or having advanced greatly towards it in the happy impresson which his pencil, together with that of Annibal, had made on that meridian, he returned to Bologna. Pius V. sent for him back‡. He came; he painted for his holiness the chapel at Montecavallo; and then he returned once more to Bologna. The death of Caravaggio soon afterwards compleated the success which Guido had striven to obtain. With the life of that artist ended all the influences of his manner; but with those influences unhappily perished, in the same year, the precious talents of Annibal Carachi. As to Arpino, who lived much longer, his capricious manner, sinking gradually under the recovery of a better taste, did not long abide with any but those who were as capricious as himself.

* Felib V. 4. p. 194, 195, 197.

† Ibid. p. 197.

‡ Ibid. p. 199, 200.

Thus flood the pencil at Rome in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless the conquest obtained over the species of bad taste which had then prevailed was no security that the art should never fall below the point at which the Carachi left it. Declension, when once it has begun, is generally more difficult to be arrested than a labouring ascent is to be maintained. In the latter case, some animation is bribed which refuses to be vanquished ; in the former, an indolence and want of spirit feels itself gratified with lesser efforts. We must therefore expect in the future stages of Roman art no more instances of those assembled perfections which appeared in the great masters who were studied by the Carachi, although we shall occasionally meet with some very estimable perfections in particular classes of the art, which might seem to arrest in some degree, but merely for themselves at most, the visible declension of that period.

In this view are presented to us three eminent characters, who will always be most properly considered as of the Roman school, although they were natives of other situations. In fact the Roman school was an aggregate of all countries professing the fine arts, and they whose profession and style were more immediately connected with that school will be most fitly arranged as Roman artists. The characters, to which we now refer, were Salvator Rosa, Claude Lorrain, and Nicholas Poussin. We have classed them together, because, however various their talents were found in other respects, they were all eminent as landscape-painters, in which character we mean more particularly to survey them ; and we have named Poussin the last of the three, although he was somewhat older than the others, because

the order of landskip, in which he shone, will more regularly find it's place, as we conceive, after the style of the other two.

Independent of their spirit and abilities in that branch of art, their pencils must not be considered as rising to the standard-works of the great masters who had gone before them, although each of them stood on ground which was not reached by others of their time. Even Poussin, who had a far greater and more profound extent of professional character than both the others, or than any others perhaps in his own age—that Poussin, than whom no man ever studied the antiques more sedulously, or was more ambitious to form himself upon them, and who came in fact nearer to their classical style than had been seen since the days of Raphael—he did not come forth from those studies the perfect painter, or the artist who combined the first-rate powers of the pencil with first-rate talents of mind, which he undoubtedly possessed, in what concerned the principles and theoretic advantages of his art. Felibien, speaking of him, observes that he came forward in a period, when the great examples both of Raphael and of the Carachi were falling into neglect. And when he adds, that Poussin was destined by his researches into the sources of art to shew to his contemporaries those standard-principles, which gave excellence to the works of the ancients, he says no more than impartial justice will demand to be spoken of his countryman*. These things will be more fully considered, when we come to speak of his works.

Salvator Rosa was endowed with very diversified talents as an

* Felib. V. 4. p. 239.

artist. It was not in landscape alone that his pencil was employed, or that he rejoiced to employ it. He felt a stronger ambition to be looked upon as an historical painter than as a great leader in landscape, where his powers were undoubtedly most eminent. And from thence it was, that his strong and sentimental mind, whenever it was engaged in the latter species of subjects, generally made them the vehicle of some history or moral instruction*.

At the same time satire, and even caricature, were delights of which his mind was as capable as of graver and more moral lessons. His satires fixed him as a writer. As a painter in that line, he was fully equal to Cerquozzi in ridicule, and to Castiglione in the combination of lighter with graver subjects. It will be almost needless to say after this, that his vein was strongly poetic, and of a feverer and bolder cast. From thence the peculiar imagery of his works obtained their character. We see in him no evidences of what may properly be called learning, nor was there any need of a learned education to throw out the tone of his talents, which have always appeared to be the result of native strength. Whatever his reading might have been, his talents were the gift of nature: his poetry was the burst of nature, looking for no polish: his landscapes, as we shall see presently, were the expression of nature, delighting in the bold appearance of her first wildness, and borrowing nothing from art but the use of the pencil.

As a satyric painter, his character was compleatly illustrated

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. I. p. 352.

in a subject which came from his hand at Rome under the very singular title of "the bounty of nature in the creation of an ass". Its real object was a satire, and a very severe one, on the pope, for which he had no great reason to rejoice in the end. That picture is now in the possession of his grace the duke of Beaufort at Badminton. And we should have entered into a particular explanation of its spirit and composition, if it had not been already described in Domeniche's treatise on the Neapolitan painters, under the life of Salvator. To that author, therefore, or to the indulgence of that noble owner of the picture, we refer those who would be gratified by the knowledge of so singular an effort of genius, and who may be in the way of obtaining that gratification from either of those sources.

The style of landscape, which Salvator chose, forms a conspicuous epoch in art, and displays an originality of which no trace appears in any pencil before his. It is the strong expression of nature in all her rougher features and undressed appearance: high and abrupt precipices; "Pelion upon Ossa piled"; mountains rising in successive range to which the eye can fix no bounds, and clothed in all the wildness of primitive apparel; waters abruptly forcing their deep descents; and vallies in which no fertility invites the eye to rest, or affords any other than a disturbed and difficult existence to those who are thrown there; these constitute the distinguishing face and character of his landscapes.

Such a choice was certainly new on a subject, in which the beautiful, the cultivated, and the rich had engrossed the emulation of those who had engaged in it, and had occupied the

first sensations of those who were attached to that branch of art, and who sought it as the source of a pleasure. But nature is never bereft of pleasure, when she is never bereft of dignity, in any of her scenes. In her first ruder views, as in the ruder stages of uncivilized life, there is abundant food for the philosophic mind. And if we consider Salvator's views as describing a stage in society, they present to us what the hand of nature, in the first boldness of her operations, threw out to the prospect of man, in order to elicit a correspondent boldness in his own conceptions, as the best preservation from the tameness too often consequent on the softening of tuition and the dress of art.

In respect to the execution of Salvator's pencil in those works, the leafing of his trees was wonderfully light and lively; but while the variableness of his genius consulted living nature less than its own habits, in a style which was all its own, his figures became often incorrect, especially at the extremities, and sometimes gigantic*.

Claude Lorrain carried on the next gradation of landscape, as it is seen in the embellishments of rural nature. We do not behold in him the same extent of originality which distinguished Salvator; inasmuch as the species of landscape, in which he trod, had been sought by all that went before him, whose equal ambition it was to produce the most finished scenes. And yet that he was original to a certain degree must be granted, for he was absolutely unassisted by letters of any kind, and could hardly write his name†; yet there were talents in his art to which no

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 354.

† *Ibid.* V. 2. p. 267.

instruction but his own assiduous attention could lead him. In aerial perspective indeed he was much helped by the lessons of Goffredi at Naples; of the lineal he knew nothing*. But in the curious and wonderful truth of his skies, in all the discriminated circumstances and effects of advancing and receding light, at the dawn of day, at sun-rising and sun-setting, at the approach of rain or of thunder, he was entirely taught by his own observations unweariedly pursued for whole seasons together in the country, by which he was enabled on the canvas to vie, as it were, with nature herself in all her variegated displays of her own aerial scenes.

With that exquisite power of giving all the beauties of sky, the talent of displaying all that was beautiful on earth was equally combined. In his hands the face of nature assumed a direct contrast to those views of it which were given by Salvator Rosa. It was a different stage of nature which he sought to exemplify. It was culture, and dress, and improved luxuriance, which he gave to the eye. Rich verdant lawns; groves rising in beautiful order, and filled with all the variety of stateliness and foliage; waters, whose smooth and pellucid surface makes more glad the sylvan scene; flocks and herds, the companions of rural industry, and it's only cares; ruins that shew something improved in domestic or in pious habits; an assemblage of whatever announces the cultivation and felicity of rural life; these derived all the advantages of which they were capable from the pencil of Claude Lorrain.

If, while you were contemplating the views of Salvator Rosa,

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 2. p. 266.

you were afraid as it were of being left in the country described by him; when you turn to those of Claude Lorrain, the difficulty is to rend your eye from the scene, you wish to dwell on it, you wish that those sylvan scenes were your's, you wish yourself the happy inhabitant of those sweet retreats.

In the execution of those objects we admire his surprising skill in the *claro obscuro*—the fresh and clear tone of his colouring, first introduced by himself into landscape, and the purity of its effect correspondent to the situation from whence it issues—every thing in the plants of nature, or in the terraces of art, disposed in the finest form, and dressed with the most perfect intelligence. In his figures alone he was unequal to himself: although he was continually making studies of these in the academy, he could never perfectly succeed. For these therefore he had recourse to the pencils of Philip Lauri and Courtois, who have so well preserved his tone and colouring, that they seem to have come from his own pallet, and to have flowed from the same hand that finished the main picture.

The third artist, who completed the gradation of landscape in that period, was Nicholas Poussin. It is fortunate for those who step forth in this line of art, that they are compelled to study nature, the only just exemplifier of her own designs, the only standard of her own truths. That necessity was happy for Poussin, who found nothing in his favourite study of antiques, which could assist him in landscape, or in the colouring proper to support it. For these, therefore, which his universal genius could not overlook, he was forced to have recourse to nature. In the choice, however, of that nature he was decided by the improve-

ments which had strengthened and elevated his mind. He had been accustomed to contemplate society on a great scale, and in a high meridian; to devote his studies to those scenes which were connected with flourishing and enlightened periods; to view the improvements of empires high in civilization, and in every culture that gives ornament and dignity to human life. These naturally entered into the character of all his landscapes, and gave them not merely as the embellished views of rural scenes, but as those embellishments going hand in hand with the general taste of a country, and with all the improvements of polished life. These we discover in the grandeur of architectural designs, which fill up his views, in his splendid palaces, his noble temples, his elegant colonades: even his highways, when he throws them across a country, bespeak a people far advanced in the arts which polish and dignify society.

It must nevertheless be observed, that in the colouring of his landscapes there was room for much improvement, although he has shewn a greater attention to natural colours in those landscapes than in his figures. His attachment, which we have already hinted, to the study of the antiques lay at the bottom of his defects in this circumstance, which may be considered as one in which he was most defective. He found no colours in ancient sculptures; he was therefore led to overlook colouring, indeed he knew little of its theory, and nothing of the artifice of the *claro obscuro*. If this has found its way into any of his pictures, it did not come there from principle. Had his landscapes been strengthened by this last advantage, admirable as they are now in many respects notwithstanding their want of it, they would have come near to perfection. Of his figures we cannot speak

entirely in the same language: these with more attention to natural colours would have appeared to more advantage. And so his carnations in general, with the same attention, would have lost that hardness of marble, to which they too much approach, for the real delicacy of flesh and blood.

These remarks must not lower him in our estimation. He is to be viewed on a larger scale as a wonderfully great man. His attentive study, and his perfect knowledge, of the antiques formed him to a great character. From thence he gained the correctness, the elegance, the admirable expression of character, the proportions, the adjustments, the fine and noble airs, and also the exactness of *costume*, which are so abundantly displayed in his works. The advantages of those studies have always been of the first rate to those who have pursued them. The only qualification important in their pursuit is, that it be not exclusive. Nature is unquestionably the origin of her own beauties, and the mistress of all the arts which would reach them. To neglect her therefore, while we take up the best standard of her works from imitation, must be a great mistake, and can only end in some unfortunate defect.

Unquestionably Poussin was willing to be contented, wherever the subject would suffer him to be so, with those views of her perfections which were afforded in antient sculpture; and from thence his designs suffered in a few circumstances more than probably they would otherwise have done. The disposition of his figures was often in bas-reliefs, and on the same line. Their attitudes were neither sufficiently contrasted, nor varied enough. In the airs of his heads, and in his expressions, he was

apt to indulge repetitions. Nature, the fountain of variety, would have taught him better. But, full of understanding himself, his great aim was to please the eyes of the understanding; and if he was wrong in neglecting the external satisfaction of that medium, through which that pleasure must pass to the mind, he was very careful by the most perfect decorum in every other circumstance not to offend the enlightened and judicious. Whatever he introduced to render his subjects agreeable and instructive, was chaste and proper. His invention in all his historical and fabulous displays was not only ingenious, but of a piece. Every thing was seen in it's real character; and the general expression of his subjects was heightened and brought home by the passions of the soul in every individual that composed them.

To close the account of that great man, if we cannot say that the graceful constitutes a feature of his genius and his works, they have nevertheless the first title to the masculine and the noble, and even to beauty though bereft of grace. His style was his own, and seems to have been destined for himself alone, inaccessible to others, who either have not attempted to imitate it, or have found that they could not go through it.

Although Felibien, speaking of the artist last mentioned, has evidently wished to except him from the general declension of that age, he has nevertheless pronounced that declension to have immediately followed the days of the Carachi, and to have been coeval with those which saw Gregory XV. in the papal chair. We conceive, that good reasons have been given to justify it's reference to an earlier period. The language, however, in

which Felibien has marked the source and progress of that declension, is unquestionably just. “ Then, says he, the study “ not only of antiquity, but of those standard-works which had “ been produced by the great masters in the preceding age, was “ neglected for a loose and selfish practice, no less feeble than “ extravagant both in design and colouring *”.

No man could have characterized more happily, than is done in those expressions, the general progress of the Roman school from those days. With the few exceptions which have already been noticed, the practice of that school will chiefly be found “ loose and selfish, feeble and extravagant”. It will be found teeming with novelties in manner, which were vainly emulated as perfections by men of no mean talents.

Pietro da Cortona became the first example of that novelty, and yet a great example. He very soon followed the Carachi, being only fourteen years old when Annibal died. His mind was naturally filled with emulation, and that emulation aspired to no less fame than was enjoyed by any of his predecessors. He gloried in great compositions, in which he succeeded best, and for which he was happily fitted by a grandeur of thought, a liveliness of imagination, and a facility in the execution of his art, had there been equal patience to dwell a little more on what he had done, and to finish with the same nicety which is necessary to produce the graceful in smaller subjects.

But the road to fame, which his mind opened to itself, was

* Felib. V. 4. p. 190, 238, 239.

a new one, untrodden by any before him. Choosing such a one, he risked no censure of imitation. And the style he adopted was calculated perhaps to please the general turn of the age more than the qualified style of the Carachi, inasmuch as it was more glowing and flowery than theirs, although in some circumstances it was not quite so chaste. Cortona knew well that graces, or what can pass for such, were always popular and pleasing, and that a fertility and liveliness of invention were a great ground of character. To reconcile these with a lighter study, or, as Felibien has expressed it, with "a loose and selfish practice", he departed at once from the principles of Raphael's school, by detaching both graces and invention from composition. The invention and the graces which he displayed terminated in the advantageous disposition of the particular figures on which they were employed, but they assisted in no degree to carry on the special intention of the subject, they did not participate of any unity in idea with the story before him. Instead of that unity in idea, he sought contrast in attitude; which, while it is less profound, engages and pleases the sight, especially of those who do not see deeply.

While he sought that ease and facility of style, he was careful to introduce nothing vitiated. There was no one province of his pencil which you could say was executed ill, and yet there was not one which was not singular in its execution. He gave to every part of the art a sufficient character to distinguish one from another, without aiming at excellence; which, he knew, was discerned only by few, and commonly not by those who bestow rewards on painters. He introduced just as much study into his compositions as might suit the general run of admirers,

without any great exertion on their part to discover it. Thus there arose, from the agreeable disposition of individual parts, a general pleasure in the whole, and indeed the first instance of a whole made up from a looseness, though not an incorrectness, of parts, which the age was not willing, nor perhaps generally able, to scan too nicely.

This gave to his manner a very extensive sway. And yet a *manner* it certainly was, and he became the mannerist, in the fameness with which his invention was applied to produce a general and superficial satisfaction, without being varied by the spirit of the subject, and without touching the sensible and reflecting mind, as Raphael and Coreggio had never failed to do. His carnations too will bear the same remarks as his inventions for the purpose of producing grace: they would have been seen with more advantage, if they had been more varied and more studied. In the arrangement, however, of his groups, and in the *claro obscuro* diffused through his works, he shewed manifest perfections.

In consequence of his success, the character of art has undergone a more sensible alteration than ever it had known before. It has been the fashion with moderns to crowd the canvas with numerous figures well disposed, but without any further advantage arising from their immediate connection with the subject. It has been conceived, that in the abundance of happy dispositions, kept up by the single power of contrast, the eye must be fascinated, whether the mind be engaged or not. It has been conceived, that if a whole be agreeably made up, no matter how just and interesting may be the composition of all its parts.

Thus they have reversed the taste of the Greeks, who were more sparing of their figures, more sentimental in their inventions, and more chaste in their compositions, being neither so "loose" towards the finer principles of their art, nor so "selfish" towards their own imperfections; and they have at the same time justified the animadversion of Felibien, by shewing themselves "both feeble and extravagant".

The school of Cortona may, therefore, be said to have had a better fortune than any other which has existed. It may be said, in fact, to have lasted to the present hour. Of his disciples, in whom the master was more immediately conspicuous, some were living in the early part of the present century. Romanelli, William Courtois, and Geminiani, who outlived the other two, carried down their master's manner to the year 1681, with only one advantage over him in the correctness of design, but falling short of him in the life and colouring of his compositions. He was more compleatly beheld to the year 1689 in Ciro Ferri, whose cielings in particular came so near to those of his master, that they have often been taken for Cortona's. Lazaro Baldi, equaling any of those other disciples in the correctness of design, and strongly resembling his master in the life and brilliancy of his subjects, survived the rest to the year 1703.

In the same age appeared Bernini, a Neapolitan, but attached to the Roman school, in which he was more conspicuous as a sculptor than a painter, and therefore shall be noticed here in the former character. His earliest works came forth with great taste, and bespoke the talents of a great master. His figure of Neptune, which, if we are not mistaken, was one of his first

sculptures, was also one of the most accomplished that came from his hands. It was conceived in all the grandeur of ancient art, and executed with more purity than he generally preserved in his subsequent works. That figure is now at Chelsea, in the possession of Mr. Aufrere, and in a situation well adapted to its character, and to the display of its execution.

In the farther progress of his profession Bernini lost very much that purity, which had first elevated his name, and gave way to a meretriciousness of style for the sake of consulting a greater facility of practice, or a false and excessive grandeur, terminating in the production of a pompous and splendid whole without a due congeniality of parts. He seems to have taken up in sculpture the principles, if so we may call them, or rather the manner, of which Cortona was the author in painting; and it is very probable that he was encouraged to do so by the great success which had followed Cortona, and by the distinction which that manner had given to his name. Hence, advancing on that system with what the pride of sculpture had to give beyond the best pride of the pencil, his designs were most superb, his invention extraordinary, his expression that which would strike most, his figures as great and as multitudinous as the plan would admit, his draperies immense in their flow, and the whole calculated for an impression which was sure to strike and astonish. In this scheme of art not only his sculpture, but his architecture also, became committed. His high altar, tabernacle, and chair of St. Peter's, together with all the other experiments of his profession in that edifice, of which he had the care, will sufficiently justify these remarks, without going to the tombs of Urban VIII. and Alex-

ander VII. or referring to the many figures which came from his hands in the later days of his art.

Of Il Fiamingo we have other things to say. He was at all times as pure and chaste in his sculptures as ever Bernini was in any moment of his profession. He had nothing to do with any novelties of manner calculated to raise a name on the traps of art more than on its genuine and approved principles, unless that may be called a novelty which exhibited his children more beautiful than they were seen in the sculptures of the Greeks. It is a rare thing to be predicated of any modern, that he has outdone those ancients in a point of art where their design was immediately concerned, and where beauty was to be the result of that design. But indeed their representation of children was the point of art, in which they appear to have been least beautiful and least natural. All their children seemed like grown bodies cut down, if we may so speak, to an infantine size. The pulpy flesh of infants was there put over bones and joints only shortened in their measure, but nearly as strong as in mature growth. They conceived that such was the proper representation of health, even in children, and that in health there must be beauty. In the former certainly those masters assumed too much, and they were even contradicted by the latter, as it has been exemplified by moderns.

Il Fiamingo gave the first examples in sculpture of that modern taste, which brought forth more beauty by pursuing the more delicate forms of infantine nature, and preserving the proportions more fitted to a tender age. But he was not original in that idea. It had been struck out by Titian in a picture of

the greatest beauty, and in his most perfect style, representing a very numerous group of cupids, employed in puerile sports under a grove of apple-trees, with the fruit of which scattered on the ground they are playing in the most gay and natural manner. The great variety of those cupids, as well as the diversity of their hair in ringlets and curls, is not more surprising than the elegance and delicacy of their frame is beautiful, in the latter of which there is nothing of that lusty fatness which had been chosen by the ancients. That picture, which was in the Ludovici palace at Rome, and is now with the king of Spain, served, according to Sandrart, for a study of beautiful children not only to Il Fiamingo, but to Domenichino, Albani, and Pouffin.

It was not in the representation of beautiful children only that the talents of Il Fiamingo excelled. His figure of St. Andrew in a niche of St. Peter's is an admirable proof of the classical purity of his sculptures. Soon after that figure was put up, it was beheld by the pope, who was then accompanied, of course, by Bernini as superintendant of the building; and Fiamingo followed in the suite of his holiness. Coming up to the statue, the pope cried out "Eja, questa bellissima figura". The cavalier, for such Bernini had been created by the pope, knew his duty better than to question the justice of his master's applause; and yet he was too supercilious both by nature and the habits of office to be satisfied with so much applause bestowed on another. Assuming therefore as much gentleness as deep cunning mixed with a pride of heart could assume, when the pope had surveyed the figure a while, he turned to Fiamingo, and observed in all the suppleness of affected professional candour, but so that his holiness might hear him, "I think, sir, you have made St. Andrew to

“ look rather more alarmed than happy”. Fiamingo, knowing very well both the man and his motives, and feeling very properly for himself, although one of the modestest men in the world, came forward, and bowing with all humility to the pope replied, “ may it please your holiness! The cavalier is perfectly right in his remark; for St. Andrew is justly alarmed “ on account of that rent in the dome of your holiness’s cathedral, which the cavalier has occasioned”. It is enough to say, that such a rent had been caused by the settling of the building in consequence of Bernini’s having imprudently perforated some of the supporters of the dome for the sake of new experiments in the alterations he had made there; and the knowledge of that rent had been industriously kept from his holiness. The chasm remains there still, impossible to be remedied, and encreasing with time. The conclusion may easily be anticipated. The pope was thunder-struck; Bernini sunk into the earth; and if the moroseness and superciliousness of his temper was capable of receiving an improving lesson, he had then learnt one for the rest of his life.

Let us now come back from the sculptures of those men to the works of the pencil in the same period. Andrea Sacchi, a Roman, is entitled to our attention, not only for his having issued from the school of Albani, whose best disciple he is reported to have been*, but for his having been the master of Carlo Maratti, who will presently be considered as introducing another novelty of manner in the later stages of modern art. It was said, that the whole spirit of Albani had passed into Sacchi†. And that

* Abrege de la Vie, V. 1. p. 33.

† Ibid. p. 34.

was true in the freshness, the delicacy, and the grace of his pencil, in his exactness of finishing every part of his composition, in the excellence of his smaller subjects, and in the simplicity added to grace, which seemed to be the legacy of Albani's art. He had another talent, of which we cannot speak as a part of that legacy, and that was his manner, which resembled no other. It was his own, and it never changed. Neither was it any portion of that legacy, that he had studied the antiques, and the grandeur of composition, which Albani never did*. From that master he gathered his elegance and softness, from Raphael and the antiques his correctness of design and his expression, from Polydore his *claro obscuro*, and from Coreggio that colouring which left him no superior in the Roman school.

His picture of St. Romuald and the Friars in the church of that name is a master-piece in art, and we need to enquire after no other work from his pencil. It is certainly a most delicious execution. We cannot conceive a greater difficulty imposed on the pencil than a number of characters all cloathed in white, and listening in a sameness of attention to the rhodomontade of an old man, yet managed with that degradation of tints which is wonderful. Nothing can be more foolish than the story itself, nor any thing more exquisite than the execution. We do not see the same artist equally fortunate elsewhere. On a ceiling in the Barberini palace he undertook as great a subject as any man ever did, and as difficult in other respects as that of St. Romuald; it was "the history of divine providence". And although that work was allowed among the Roman painters, who were not most friendly to him on one account or another,

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 288.

to have considerable merit*, yet when you have viewed it, or before you come to it, you pass through a hall in which there is a ceiling painted by Cortona†, and eclipsing every thing near it.

From the school of Sacchi arose Carlo Maratti, in whom Roman art beheld another remarkable innovation, next after that which had been introduced by Pietro da Cortona. Maratti had great powers, and he drew them from the highest sources of modern art. He formed an assemblage of manner from the Carachi for design, from Coreggio for gracefulness, and from Titian for colouring. In consequence of that combination, and especially by the brilliant composition of his colours, he became very fascinating; and the more so, when those powers were all directed to the production of a general gracefulness, which had been the immediate bent of his pencil from the first. That bent he had inherited by a kind of descent from the school of Albani, and it had been increased by his earliest employment in painting Madonas and female saints, insomuch that Salvator Rosa satyrically named him “*Carluccio delle Madone*”. And so satisfied was he himself with that character, as giving to his pencil all the glory he sought, that on his monument placed at Termini some years before his death, alluding to the name given him by Salvator, he calls it “*gloriosum cognomentum*”.

Here then we obtain from full authority the key to the leading principle of that manner, which he sought to establish in his paintings. It was a new and peculiar grace, which he studied

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 34.

† *Ibid.* p. 126.

to produce. It was the same grace, on which he had ever been employed when he painted Madonas and female saints. He knew no other, and he had no opinion of any other as exceeding it. That grace therefore was given to every thing; he conceived that every thing which obtained it must appear to greater advantage. But here the "*ne quid sit nimis*" should have been recollected. Here excess began to mar what had been pure and natural before. For that, which was excellence itself in those delicate figures on which it had been employed, became nothing less than affectation when it was given to the attitudes of men, and very improper when every object was made to share some portion of it's spirit. Thus the grace, on which he was intent, became too much studied, it was overstrained, and bereft of simplicity. Unlike the grace either of the ancients or of Raphael, it exhibited positions and actions which looked unnatural, like those of children. And consequently the characters distinguished by it appear more like actors introduced to play particular parts, than the identical persons to whom those parts belonged, and whose minds were interested in the event, as they are always seen in the works of Raphael.

This was a different aim from that which had been taken by Pietro da Cortona, but it carried by no means less ambition. Cortona had sought a gracious novelty in the whole, from an equal novelty in all the parts, but without trespassing on purity or simplicity in any of those parts. Maratti also sought a supreme grace in the whole, wrought up on the most delicate ideas of grace, and diffused over every part, but with a manifest trespass on the purity and simplicity of character in many of those parts. He conceived that a manner founded on so much exqui-

lite softness, and assisted by a most captivating colouring, must obscure every other. And perhaps he adopted an easier mode of getting over the masterly accomplishment of expression than had been devised by Pietro da Cortona. His manner, however, obtained success, and became very prevalent. Its influences were carried down, although with fainter powers, by his immediate disciples Passeri and Chiari to the year 1727; but they have not been limited to that period.

We will not say, that something of that overstudied grace may not have been sometimes observed in the works of the great Coreggio, and still more in those of Parmegiano, and others who have devoted themselves to that style so naturally seducing, and yet so difficult to find its boundary.

We have not yet gone through the Roman school in the seventeenth century. Other views of art remain to be taken, besides those which have passed before us in the great masters, whose works have been considered. And those who come next were also great masters in their respective classes of art, although it was very rarely in any of those classes that the pencils of those who have preceded were engaged. It is our duty to follow the spirit of art, in what way soever we find it eminently employed, but it is only its more eminent exercise that can demand our attention. The examples which follow appeared in different stages of that century, and some of them were as early as any that have been named; but we judged it best to bring them together, from the general relation which their pencils had to each other.

In small historical pieces, but more frequently in metamorphoses, or Bacchanals, with back grounds of landskip, Philip Lauri exhibited a chearful and good taste*. Michael Cerquozzi, incompetent to history in any shape, yet raised a name by amusing the young men in Rome, after the manner of Bambocchio†, with marches, fairs, and pastorals, filled with numerous animals, and enlivened by considerable ridicule or fun, in which his superior execution gave him the name of Michael Angelo delle Bambocciate‡. But he opened also the field of battles, from whence he likewise got the name of Michael Angelo des batailles, though inferior to the Bourguignone§, who came twenty years after him on a greater scale, and with more understanding and fire, in the same line of painting. John Miel, although a Flemming, must be considered as of the Roman school, in which his greatest studies were made, and of which he was indeed a member. Contemporary with Cerquozzi, and in the opinion of many his equal in subjects of grotesque, he was also eminent in landskip, and at the same time very competent to history, of which he left many testimonies in the gallery of Monte Cavallo, and in many churches at Rome: yet his attachment to the grotesque so checked or perverted the elevation of his thoughts, and depraved his taste, that his designs in history always appeared to disadvantage, and it's dignity, especially in the airs of his heads, sunk under his pencil||. In Castiglione, again, we find pastorals, marches, and animals combined with history, sacred or profane, and with more dignity of manner**.

* Abrege de la Vie, V. 1. p. 59.

† Ibid. V. 2. p. 77.

‡ Ibid. V. 1. p. 40—42.

§ Ibid. V. 2. p. 313—316.

|| Ibid. p. 177.

** Ibid. V. 1. p. 379.

In the more immediate province of landskip, Grimaldi, known by the name of Bolognese, and attached to the Roman academy of which he was twice named the prince or chief, although he had been first educated at home under the immediate successors of the Carachi, had considerable merit in the style of the Carachi themselves. His figures were good, and his leafing enchanting, although his scenes were apt to be rather too green*. Gaspar Dughet improved still more the simple idea of landskip, unconnected with other subjects, and not meliorated by any excellence of figures, unless when he obtained them, as he often did, from his brother-in-law Nicholas Poussin : we may almost call him original, when he drew the winds and storms into his pictures ; for although Ambrogio Lorenzetti, a disciple of Giotto, three hundred years before him is recorded as the first in that nice species of art, in which there was no second before Gaspar, yet it is difficult to speak of what came from the hands of that older artist. Gaspar certainly was unrivalled in that way ; his leaves seemed agitated, and the trees ceased to be inanimate under his pencil. Yet those trees were generally somewhat too green, and his masses were rather too much of the same colour†. Peter Francis Mola shall close this group of artists. Brought up successively under Albani and Guercino, and perfected by the study of Titian and Bassan at Venice, consequently a strong designer and a good colourist, he came to Rome with those advantages in landskip, which gave him a great name, diminished only by the misfortune that his colours were often too dark. From the common name of Mola, or from the want of discriminating between two of the same name, his figures have often been mis-

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 310.

† *Ibid.* p. 45.

taken for those of John Baptist Mola. The fact is, that those of Peter Francis partook more of the vigorous expression of Guercino, and of the Carachi themselves, than of Albani's school, which was more closely followed by John Baptist, but with a great want of that master's mellowness.

There is another little group, of which we must make mention before we can properly close the seventeenth century, although most of them saw some of the earlier years of the century in which we now live. They were artists who looked up high to the province of history, but with those falling pretensions, which, if they had not been found in that period of Roman art, would have left us in some surprise. They were either followers of some of the *mannered* schools which had lately risen up before them, or implicit followers of one another; and they were all, moreover, incorrect in design. So far they not only became examples of great declension, but they had reversed the spirit and system of Roman art, in which that perfection of design had been the first study and emulation.

In that group Bacici stood forward, pushed into practice first by his own genius, and then by the employment of picture-sellers, more than by any special instructions. With the magic of foreshortening he emulated great things on ceilings; and on the cupola of Jesus he left the work which was most to be admired. If we could depend on the temper of Bernini for the general justness of his preference, it was no small encomium on Bacici, that through the recommendation of the cavalier he was preferred in the painting of that cupola both to Ciro Ferri

and to Carlo Maratti*. The former certainly was not less correct in design than Bacici, whose figures were also heavy, and his draperies much mannered, although his colouring was far superior in it's force to the other's, by the confession of Ferri himself†. But we cannot speak of his colouring, or of his general talents, as superior to those of Carlo Maratti. In his disciple Odazzi was seen the spirit and turn of the master's pencil, exemplified in a pointed manner on the cupola of Velletri‡. Benedetto Lutti was another who then enjoyed a considerable name, but by dint of labour more than of genius, and without much foundation in the correctness of design§. Yet his general taste was allowed to be good, his pencil was fresh and strong, an agreeable harmony reigned in his pictures, and his colouring was inferior to no other advantage. It is remarkable that he, who was not a Lombard but a Florentine, and who had finished his education in the Roman school, should have made colouring rather than design his principal study||. But the same circumstance had marked the other artists whom we have last mentioned; and it will shew the great change which that school gradually underwent when it had become the great university of art, and especially in those later periods when Lombards became numerous among it's professors.

Here let us take our stand for a moment, and look back on the principal features of that declension which marked the age through which we have just passed. How different was the face of art in the seventeenth century from what it had appeared in

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 1. p. 387.

† *Ibid.* p. 54.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 390.

§ *Ibid.* p. 132.

|| *Ibid.*

the century preceding, and more especially from the character it bore in the fifteenth, although that character was avowed to be the study of all who would be great in their profession?

The refined and profound spirit of exalted character, the accurate truth of nature and expression, the unity of invention, and, above all, the loftiness of poetic imagery and conception, which had distinguished the schools of Michael Angelo or Raphael, were beheld but imperfectly in the further progress of the sixteenth century, and none of them were seen in the seventeenth, unless we allow that they were attained in any portions by Nicholas Poussin.

In all the other powers of the pencil, which rank more immediately under the class of mechanical, we do not find in the artists of the last century that assemblage, which was generally seen in those of the foregoing age. We find very often great powers, but they were either confined to some individual points of execution, or they were directed to a confined, and perhaps a lower, province of the art, or they were sunk in the pursuit of a manner, by which the art was not elevated, and which was below the contemplation of those great masters who had contributed to fix the standard of modern art.

That general bent to a manner, whether created by the artist himself, or peculiar to those whom he chose to follow as a model, was a sad misfortune, and ever will be felt as such. Of these, the first argues a want of capacious invention, for which perhaps there is no remedy; and the prejudice which arises from it attaches personally to the artist himself: for if the composition

be well executed in other respects, the reputation of art suffers not at all in the eyes of beholders, who see the sameness of thoughts, or expression, or character employed in every work of that artist, and having seen one can ascertain every other, how diversified soever in subject, which may come from his hand.

But the latter is a misfortune, which carries a more extensive and more permanent effect. It entails mischief on the art, inasmuch as it smothered the scope of genius, and keeps the pencil in a miserable servitude, to which the artist becomes devoted by partiality of sentiment. And this misfortune has now been felt too long; it has fastened itself not only on duller minds, but often on those who were capable of stretching into a freer exercise; and it has been found always to encrease exactly in a reversed ratio to the decrease of the art itself. In the last century this was the constant mark of every school and of every artist who came from it. *La scuola* and *la maniera* were, in fact, synonymous terms. Those who came after slid, as it were, irresistably into the manner of some who had gone before, and they had not always discernment or resolution enough to disengage themselves from it, when they arrived at greater experience. Even the humours of rural life pursued by Cerquozzi were an avowed imitation of the style of Bambochio, who, as Baldinucci* asserts, was himself the imitator of a Peter Wander.

We shall now pass to the state of Roman art in the present century, looking, as we have already said, only to those characters in whom it has best appeared. And it is due to that meri-

* p. 367. § 5. *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 2. p. 76.

dian in the present age to say, that those who have occupied the first consideration in it's school, have aimed at nothing below the highest province of their art. Had they been so fortunate as to have preceded the birth of those mannered schools whose influence became general, there is reason to believe that the energy they have shewn, and the excellence to which they have risen in some things, would have surmounted any other circumstance in their practice, by which they may have appeared less perfect.

Bianchi was an infant when the present century commenced. He was a flower that blowed early, and having soon come to maturity, was soon cut off. He gave earlier hopes of rising to a great character in his profession than were almost ever known. For, having, surprized his friends by his capacity at seven years old in drawing a figure which had been given him as a prize at school, and from thence having been immediately put under the directions of Giacomo Triga, that master declared in a few days after Bianchi had been with him, that " he would give one of " his fingers to know as much as that boy". In a very short time afterwards being brought under the instructions of Bacici, the beauty of his design for the tomb of Paul III. carried the prize over thirty competitors. At the age of fifteen having lost that instructor, he went under Benedetto Lutti, who declared that " he had never been blessed with such a disciple" *.

His genius was almost universal in the classes of his art, and his invention was wonderfully various. But he was after all arrested in his promising career by a want of determination in his

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 3. p. 77.

mind, which left no decided character to his pencil, nor suffered any to be maintained in his designs. In all his works he effaced as much as he drew, he retouched and even changed his figures continually, and no sooner was a piece finished than the whole of it frequently disappeared, and came again in another shape *. The author of the *Abrege* would impute this to the superior reach of his genius, which saw so much perfection beyond whatever it had embraced. But then, the reply is easy, that a genius so capacious would at once have gone to the highest perfection it had viewed. Another reason therefore must be given. It was the divided influence of the *scuole*, which left him for ever perplexed and undecided in his manner, and he did not live long enough to bring his mind to a more independant firmness.

Benedetto Benefiali came forward in the same period—a meteor in his age, and another Carachi in his pencil. When we have said this, we hardly need to observe that he had nothing of Cortona's school; and as to that of Maratti, it had risen up too short a time before him to carry after it a man so little to be moved out of his way as he was, and who had not been brought up within its vortex. His famous picture of "the flagellation" in the church at the fountain de Trevi is a sufficient testimony of the spirit of this master, and how much he had made the style of the Carachi his model. Some years ago the original study of that picture came by some means into private hands in London. It passed to the possessor for Annibal Carachi's: and so it continued to pass for some time among those artists, who were well

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. 3. p. 78.

acquainted with the style of that master, but had either not seen, or not attended to, Benefiali's picture in the place abovementioned. Mr. Penny, the late professor of painting in our Royal Academy, and Mr. Hoare of Bath, were happy to rank themselves as pupils of Benefiali, and experienced the advantages of his instructions, while they were at Rome.

Sir Antonio Raphael Mengs came next on the theatre of Roman art; for that was the theatre most dear to him, notwithstanding all the encouragements and honours he received elsewhere, and especially at the court of Madrid. And yet it is by his paintings in Spain more than by those at Rome, because the former are both more numerous and of more magnitude than the latter, that the true character and powers of his pencil will best be decided. The very uncommon admiration in which his works have been held in the former of those countries, and the want of knowing what he had done there, and how he had done it, (so little has that country been visited for its collections in art) have served to stifle, or to check very much, the course of opinion concerning that artist. Within these few years we have been favoured with some anecdotes concerning those collections by a very accomplished gentleman*, who has had the opportunity of inspecting them, and who has not only opened to our knowledge more than had been understood or conceived by any that had not either been there, or met with the works of Palomino, but has given us much original intelligence concerning Mengs and his works. We must acknowledge our obligations to him for the agreeable lights he has afforded, while

* Mr. Cumberland.

we equally admire the candour of his remarks, and feel the impressions of that taste and judgment with which they are distinguished. But he has not drawn that line of explicit opinion, which may preclude us from forming one, without trespassing on his original observations farther than may be inevitable where we meet at the same point.

No man was ever more deeply devoted to the study and pursuit of his art than Mengs. It absorbed, in fact, the whole of his professional life, uninterrupted by any relaxations. In all its mechanical powers, at least, we may therefore expect to find him, as he was, a perfect master. His pencil was measured to all the accuracy and truth of academical prescription. No impeachment could be brought on his design, his compositions were well managed, and his finishing was masterly and delicate, when his own anxiety did not mar what his hand had once done well.

But there he became too commonly unfortunate. He knew not when to leave off. Bianchi was not more restless, variable, and undecided than he. He touched and retouched his figures for ever, till very often the first outline, and all the spirit it had, was annihilated and lost. From the same cause his carnations, instead of becoming more natural with their abundant finishing, acquired, like those of Vanderwerf, and by the same means, a resemblance of ivory; they were too polished and glossy, and yet of too yellow a cast. The living had nothing of life, and the dead had nothing cadaverous.

His frescos therefore were generally the best, where he could

never retouch what he had once done. The first stroke of the pencil there must be the last. And although in works of that kind great determination and firmness is required, yet as they are executed from previous designs, Mengs would suffer nothing there from his usual habit in easel-pieces: his eye was too quick, when called to a prompt exercise, to lose any truth or correctness; and in fact every line became a new one, when drawn on the new surface, whatever pains he might have taken with the design before him. It partook of the master's original measure of talent, without the disadvantage of being affected by the formality of after-labour, unless so far as it might share in the colouring too anxiously bestowed on the first design. His fresco-cielings of "the Apotheosis of Trajan," "the Graces," and the Aurora," in the palace of Madrid, are proofs to which we may appeal for the truth of these observations, in opposition to all the easel-pieces that came from his hands.

With such a habit of after-labour it is hardly possible to suppose the association of much life, and spirit, and character. What the academy could give, he possessed; but no academy can give the soul of painting. No precepts nor examples can provide in another that invention, to which nature has not enlivened him, nor sown its seeds within him. That inventive spirit, that life and soul of character, Mengs did certainly not attain, although they were the glory of Raphael, whom he never could enough adore. They were lost in the precision of academic ideas, and they were in vain attempted to be recovered by that persevering labour, which could only have obliterated them, had they appeared.

This observation, abundantly justified in all his pictures, is more particularly confirmed in the best of his easel-pieces, "the death of Christ," which he painted at Madrid. The subject itself was taken up to out-do that of Rubens in the Escorial; the general conduct of it therefore, being very similar to the other, called for no exertion of thought: that exertion was bestowed in making a beautiful corpse, and it ended in a very finished waxen figure: the attendants on that melancholy scene are afflicted in due form, they are fitters for attitudes, and hirelings for sorrow, as the author of those anecdotes beautifully expresses it: and the figure who appears most impassioned among them, and most distinguishedly sensible, is St. John, which the same author assures us is expressly copied from a picture on the same subject by Vandyke, now in that author's possession, and formerly in the possession of Mengs; with this singular difference, that he has transferred to St. John the expression which Vandyke had given to Mary the sister of Martha. Is there not in this circumstance, as well as in the strained attitudes of all the figures, something that hung by the school of Maratti?

Of Pompeo Battoni, who came forward a few years after Mengs, and within these very few years has paid the debt to nature, we shall say but little; because he has so lately gone by, that the partialities of friendship, and perhaps the prejudices of rivals, may yet be too much alive to suffer an impartial opinion without offending either the one or the other. Suffice it to observe, that his emulation was very exalted, his success was very great, and the professional character he has left is very respectable on the whole.

We are more ready to speak explicitly of the living, when we can speak well. And we are happy to pay that tribute of just applause to our two countrymen Gavin Hamilton and Dorno, the former much older than the latter, but between both of whom the credit of the Roman school seems at present to be divided. It is not in the eve of life that the former is left to gather that fame, which has long followed his professional character. And the latter has already done some works which have attested the enterprize of his talents, and will mark them to future times. The death of Hector, taken not in that moment when it becomes a common death-bed or chamber scene, but in that grander moment fit only to be embraced by enlarged talents, when the body is brought up to the Trojan walls, and when there is the fullest assemblage of a great and affecting scenery to dignify the event; that subject, we hear, has lately undergone the pencil of Dorno, and with an execution that does him honor.

In the deduction we have given of the arts at Rome to the present time we have said nothing on the subject of engraving, because a summary view of that branch of art in its several variations, and of its progress through different countries, has been given in our account of Florence, where it appears to have originated. We need not therefore to pursue its progress at Rome, unless we observe further, as to one particular branch of engraving not hitherto mentioned, we mean that which is effected on plates by aqua fortis, and the use of the instrument called "the point," that it made its first appearance in the sixteenth century. It was devised for the purpose of working with more facility and dispatch than by the burine, although its execution is not so neat. We cannot undertake to say, whether it was struck

out by Parmegiano, as some have thought, who, while he was at Rome, etched in that manner a nativity of Christ, and some other lesser subjects which it rendered very gracious; or whether it was the invention of other Lombard artists then also at Rome, among whom Fra Bastiano is recorded to have etched in that way the works of many masters*. In smaller and lighter pieces this method of engraving has frequently been found to succeed better than that which is pursued with the burine; although it is often necessary for the burine to finish what the point has begun.

On the advances of architecture also there can be no occasion to say much; because, having traced those advances to the revival of the Grecian orders under Brunelleschi at Florence, and having discussed at large in our account of ancient Greece the spirit and principles pursued in the constitution of those orders, and in the whole progress of Grecian architecture, to follow its steps through the modern world would be to tread the same ground anew; while nothing materially new can arise from the same principles well understood, and attentively pursued. And as to knowing those individuals, by whom those principles were most eminently pursued, it is no part of our purpose merely to write lives. Thus far, however, we may observe without being superfluous, or departing from our purpose, that in the great meridian of Rome they who were selected for the high office of erecting or taking care of the immense fabric of St. Peter's, and the other edifices appertaining to the papal dignity, were the first architects of their age. If any of their studies were more profound, or their natural capacities more enlarged, than those of

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 309.

others, a superiority would be seen in the taste and disposition of those Grecian principles on which they proceeded. But they all started from the same goal which had been fixed by Brunelleschi.

True it is, that in Florence many who came after him went much beyond the taste which he had shewn in the palace Pitti. If it be said, that palace was a rustic plan: so was the palace-Strozzi in the same city, begun by Benedetto Maiano fifty years after the other; and yet Cronaca, who went on with that building after Benedetto's death, and who had made himself master of the whole Vitruvian art, had the address to combine with Benedetto's design a most beautiful Corinthian cornice at the top of the building in the true spirit of the antique, and an elegant cor-tile around it constructed in the Doric and Corinthian orders*. He died in 1509. Yet it was many years after his time before any palace in Florence had square windows, and frontispieces, and doors whose columns sustained an architrave, frize, and cornice. These were first given by Baccio d'Agnolo to the palace Bartolini, where their novelty became the subject of great ridicule for some time†. There also Baccio strove to equal the splendid cornice of Cronaca in the palace-Strozzi; but in that circumstance he incurred a more lasting ridicule, although his cornice was just and admirable in all its proportions, if those proportions had befitted the building to which that cornice was applied. The Florentines said, it was like a huge hat on a very small head‡.

In similar stages the spirit of Grecian architecture advanced at

* Vafari, V. 2. p. 103, 104, 105.

† Ibid. p. 285.

‡ Ibid. p. 104. 285.

Rome after the days of Brunelleschi; not indeed, that we know of, with such mistakes as that of Baccio, yet sometimes with others, and those not less serious. The man, who came forward immediately after those days, was Leon Baptista Alberti. He was brought to Rome by Nicholas V. at a time when that pope and his favourite architect, Bernardo Rossellino of Florence, were doing no honour to themselves, nor good to Rome, by their manner of building. He was nevertheless united with Bernardo, probably with the view of profiting by his plans. And yet they seem to have been more generally employed on the repairs of edifices, and in restoring water-conduits, which had gone to ruin, than in original structures, unless it were the fountain de Trevi*. Nicholas indeed had many magnificent designs in view, but death put an end to them all†.

We may therefore consider Bramante, who was a boy when Alberti was first introduced to Nicholas V. as the man who first exemplified to any eminent degree the spirit of Grecian architecture at Rome. And Vafari tells us, that he avowedly followed the footsteps of Brunelleschi‡. It was the resolution of Julius II. to pull down the old fabric of St. Peter's, and to raise up another on a far more extensive and magnificent plan, suggested by the designs of Bramante. No doubt, that architect, who had taken great pains to become master of all the science and taste involved in the Grecian orders, and who went beyond all that came before him in a vastness of conception, brought forth those orders with great ability, as well in the immense design

* Vafari, V. 1. p. 274.

† Ibid. p. 321, 322.

‡ Ibid. V. 2. p. 33.

of St. Peter's as in others of a lesser scale*. And yet the former underwent very considerable alterations by those who came after him in the office of completing that edifice. Nor were those the alterations of caprice, but, in many instances, of a purer taste and maturer judgment. It was somewhat altered by Julian di San Gallo, Raphael, and Joconda, who succeeded jointly to that office on Bramante's death. It was more altered still, and considerably reduced in its plan, by Balthazzar Peruzzi, who came next after them, and who had studied architecture under Bramante himself. It was afterwards altered more considerably by Antonio di San Gallo, the nephew of Julian, although many of his alterations were not of a good taste, they partook more of the old Tedeschi architecture than of the ancient Grecian†. Therefore they gave way in the next stage to a new model introduced by Michael Angelo Buonaroti, who completed that structure, and assembled in its design an infinity of taste proceeding from his own genius, and carried on with infinite variations on the practice of the ancients‡. We now behold that building as his, except the front, which is not his design, nor equal to the back part of the structure and the outermost tower.

But Bramante, with all his studies of the ancients, and all his emulation of Brunelleschi's attainments, had left those who came after him more to do than merely to alter his designs for the better. For the fabric of St. Peter's, less maturely considered, as it should seem, in its geometrical construction than in its apparent design, was going to ruin in many places so early as when

* See Vafari, V. 2. p. 35, 36, 37, 125, 126.

† Ibid. p. 325.

‡ Ibid. p. 38, 145, 149, et Introduzione della architettura, p. 23.

it was in the hands of those who came immediately after him; and it was indebted to the judgment of Joconda for a better foundation than had been originally given to it in many parts*.

Raphael was not more fortunate in that respect than his preceptor in architecture, to whose office he succeeded. And we do not wonder that he, whose mind had been so much directed another way, should have left something unstudied in the geometrical parts of that profound science. In building the loges of the Vatican, the foundation was so unequal to support the weight above, that Antonio di San Gallo, who came very soon after him, and who appears to have been a better geometrician and engineer than a designer, was obliged to give it new strength, in order to save the structure†. It may be some diminution of Raphael's mistake, although not much in his favour, to observe, that he suffered that infirmity to take place in accommodation to the pleasure of others.

Michael Angelo was too profound in geometry and in the science of construction to leave any defects to be cured by others; and his taste was carried to such refinement as to leave it not very material for us to enquire minutely, who they were that afterwards took the lead in architecture at Rome. But the names of Pirro Ligorio, of Vignola, and Domenico Fontana, who severally succeeded to that precedence, will not suffer themselves to be passed unnoticed. The first indeed had the rashness to make some alterations in Michael Angelo's design of St. Peter's, by which he so offended Pius V. as to lose his situation in the care of that edi-

* Vafari, V. 2, p. 252.

† Ibid. p. 320.

fice, which then devolved on Vignola, with the charge of holding sacred what Michael Angelo had done. In that period was instituted at Rome the academy of architecture, to whose purposes Vignola became eminently serviceable, and which was composed of many ingenious characters, among whom was Marcello Cervino, who afterward became pope. In Fontana were manifested those wonderful powers as an engineer in removing and setting up the Egyptian obelisks under Sixtus V. which left him inferior to no others in his age.

Under all these circumstances it will be obvious, that if the whole of the sixteenth century was not equally marked by the continued perfections of the pencil, it nevertheless saw the profession of architecture in Italy at the highest point of celebrity. Every part of that country, as well as Rome, then abounded in characters distinguished by the radical knowledge as well as by the refinement of that profession, and contributing by their studies to fix the revived standard of Grecian perfection. But more especially in the state of Venice, and in general Lombardy, those studies were pursued with an ardor, which produced; besides many of those already mentioned, an assemblage of great engineers and architects, in Michael San Michael, Falconetti, Sanfovino, Serlio, Barbaro, Scamozzi, and Palladio, whose works and writings have become the Vitruvian code to modern times, and have given education to those who have followed them in their profession.

If Pirro Ligorio was disgraced for altering Michael Angelo's designs, Bernini, who became first architect of Rome in the following century, conceived that other liberties with those designs

might be taken without offence, provided they did not amount to direct alterations. But the liberties he took were such as left him no credit to claim on the score of geometrical science, and such as were consequently more injurious than any external alterations. Indeed, it was not geometrical science that was nearest to his studies, nor was he the man to stand upon niceties, where his mind was fully engaged. As an architect, and equally indeed as a sculptor, he came with a dashing hand to make free with many things which had cost his predecessors abundant study, and with a towering mind to overpower by superior shew what had been beheld with advantage before. When therefore he erected his new throne, and its other concomitant works, within the church of St. Peter, he stripped the brazen tiles from the Pantheon, and melted them into columns, which might rival by their immense height and splendor any that Constantinople could ever exhibit in the church of St. Sophia. But that was no immediate part of his crime, to which we have alluded. It appeared in a more serious instance. Instead of letting the musicians and singers of that cathedral be seen in their gallery, he devised the erection of a screen in the resemblance of a cloud, through which the notes and voices should issue as from an angelic choir riding in the air. And unquestionably sweet was the effect of that ingenious trap to devotion. To complete it however, he saw no alternative but by perforating one of the great supporters of the dome for a private ascent unto the cloud; and that alternative did not restrain him. The consequence was the rent in the dome, of which we have already spoken, and which will probably leave another age to lament the temerity of the man, who seems not to have sufficiently considered that dome as a phenomenon in modern art, which had rendered Michael Angelo immortal.

Having investigated the spirit and progress of art at Rome, we shall now wind up our inquiry with the spirit and progress of patronage in that meridian.

Sufficient has been said of those periods, in which the arts were awakened and encouraged by Nicholas V. and more especially by Sixtus IV. who saw very nearly the end of the fifteenth century. Our inquiry into patronage will therefore open with the commencement of the century next following, and with the pontificate of Julius II. immediately followed by that of Leo X.—a period distinguished by that peculiar greatness, or, if you will, ambition, not only in the pontifical character, but on every throne in Europe, and replete with that rising greatness among the more educated in every country, which may naturally make us inquisitive to know with what spirit, and to what ends, that ambition was directed in the patronage of the fine arts at Rome.

Let us first recognize the general ambition of that period, in which the fine arts also appeared in their highest celebrity.

On the papal throne the two pontiffs we have just mentioned, born for great enterprizes, drew every eye towards their pontificates, in which were involved not only the interests of the papacy, but the general interests and peace of Europe. Clement VII. followed them in all their emulations. And Paul IV. was in no respect behind any that preceded him in the views of papal aggrandisement, or in the measures that were calculated to set Europe in a flame. Sixtus V. closed that age with a name, which left no other to be spoken of more comprehensively daring as a politi-

cian and a sovereign, or more comprehensively splendid as a man of taste.

On the throne of France every thing was magnificent and spirited, although not always fortunate nor prudent, in Francis I; under whom that country assumed not only a polish, but a political importance, which was rather new to it's experience, and which in the days that followed under Catherine de Medicis and the factious Guises broke out into all the excesses of ambition, and became tinged with the deepest spirit of Machiavel himself.

The throne of Spain, which had been moulded by Ferdinand to a systematic craft of ambition, exhibited in Charles V. a monarch possessed of talents and activity as singularly great as his dominions were singularly extensive, and qualified to support the first part in the great theatre of the world. Different indeed was the character of his son Philip II. in whom superstition took the place of genius, and tyranny was hatched in gloominess of soul: yet the world had more to suffer from meanness in that son than from all the ambition of the father, who was too wise to sow the seeds of rebellion, with which the superstitious despotism of the son filled every part of his dominions.

In the east Soliman II. more formidable than his father Selim I. and even formidable to Charles V. led on the Turks to great exploits. And in the north Gustavus Vasa gave liberty to Sweden.

The Imperial branch of the house of Austria had been in a languishing state for a number of years; which, if it took from

their political fame, contributed something to the happiness perhaps of Germany, but at least of the rest of Europe.

England had her share in the general ambition of that age. Henry VIII. was no less high by nature than any other monarch of his time. But that which by nature might have approached to glory, became by the indulgence of his passions, and the tameness of his parliaments, warped into the despot, and indeed into the monster in some instances. But Elizabeth made amends. She held the sceptre in real fame, founded on much natural genius, abundant knowledge, strong resolution, and a profound policy, which enabled her well to support the weight of government in tempestuous times, and marked her reign as the golden age of her country.

Along with that political ambition, which then marked all the sovereigns of Europe, those who adhered to the system of papal authority felt the influences of another rage, which drew all that ambitious character into its vortex. The madness of superstition was then preparing to strengthen itself by the establishment of the Inquisition; and *Machiavel's prince* laid the foundation of a detestable policy, which was only fit to engender crimes.

In this abridged view of that age, while we behold the considerable talents then opened to the world, and the high emulations of those talents, we see also mixed traits of character which predominated in the direction of the whole, and gave the general cast to all greater pursuits. A spirit of superstition engrafted on political craft was the great ambition of that age. These were studied by sovereigns, but they were cultivated by popes for

more interesting reasons. Superstition was needful to maintain their religion ; but political greatness, combined with the other, was indispensable to prop up their throne. The former had been long embraced, and in it's progress had caught whatever assistance could be derived from those arts, which impress a strong attraction on the mind. It could not therefore be expected that the latter would overlook the same powerful aids.

With this key we shall soon open our way to the spirit of papal patronage, at least in a great share of it's exercise. It is to be lamented that the divine pencil of Raphael should have felt the adulterations of that spirit ; but perhaps a less eloquent pencil could not have reached the object. If the mind must be seized by a new impression, if the sentiments of a people must be secured to new views of power, it were idle to choose inferior talents for that work. It was therefore some advantage to the purposes of the holy see, that a Raphael was found to record, in the allegory of " Heliodorus", the successful prowess of Julius II. who had rendered the patrimony of St. Peter secure and independant. With the same advantage, the divine destination of permanent sovereignty in that holy see, with or without arms to maintain it, became established to the wondering world, by the powers of the same pencil, in " the defeat of Attila" by the eloquence and prayers of Leo I. and in the defeat of the Saracens at Ostia by Leo IV. And with the same happy impression the investiture of that holy see with temporal dominion by the kings of France, in short, the raising the popes from bishops to princes, was recognized in the grateful " consecration of Pepin" by pope Stephen II. and in " the coronation of Charlemagne" by Leo III. The occasion indeed was artfully embraced at a time when

another king of France* was come to Rome to pay his respects to another pope†: and from thence it has been thought by some, that those two pictures of Raphael were simply intended to exhibit the consecration and coronation of Francis I. But Felibien assures us, for very good reasons, that their purpose was deeper, and their reference such as we have explained it‡. We should add, that the subject of “king Pepin giving Ravenna to the see of Rome” was afterwards executed by Sermoneta in the Capella Sistina§.

“The justification of Leo III”, and “the miracles of Leo IV”, recorded by Raphael’s pencil, established the sanctity and the irresistible influence of the pontifical character; while “the miracle of the sacrament at Bolsena” fixed the church in the possession of its sheet-anchor, the doctrine of transubstantiation. After these, what more was necessary than “the delivery of St. Peter from prison”, to shew the eternal protection of heaven attendant on his successors as well as on himself? And the device was not less neat, or less bold, when the delivery of that apostle was made the ground of allusion to the cardinal Legate’s escape from prison after the battle of Ravenna, although he was then but an inferior candidate for the extraordinary protection of heaven, not having arrived to the sacred character of pope, by the name of Leo X. till a year after that event; but then it was precisely that day twelvemonth.

From those and other sacrifices of the arts to superstition, not only in the repetition of subjects which had no other views than

* Francis I. † Leo X. ‡ Felib. V. i. p. 237, 238.

§ Felib. V. 3. p. 123.

what were superstitious, but in blending that principle with every purer subject into which it could possibly be introduced, the papal church derived no inconsiderable help to maintain its spiritual ground. But the objects of worldly policy were still more earnest, if possible; and while they were less hackneyed on the canvas, they were no less sublime in their effect, under a pencil which could give to the legendary tale the dignity of fact, and make men gaze till they believed, and lost all question of truth and simplicity in what was displayed. In both those purposes the pencil of Raphael did more than, with all our admiration of it, we can rejoice to have seen, and more than we hope will ever be done again by the finest pencil in the world. That condition of patronage is surely to be lamented, by which the professor of elegant art is brought to sink from the purity of character, to become a pander to meretricious views, and an instrument of abusing good understanding.

But we must not conceive that the whole of the papal patronage was involved in those superstitious frauds. Much of it yet remains to be seen in a higher and purer dignity, to which both Raphael and Michael Angelo were called. We must recollect, that they had a new and different source of subject from any that lay within the reach of the most cultivated ages in the ancient world, in that glorious revelation from heaven by Jesus Christ, which furnished the most august and venerable scenes that could engage the eye, or fill the heart of man. In the grandeur therefore of subjects, and in the copiousness of that grandeur, they had every advantage which could be given to the pencil; and it must be owned that so far as the subjects of revelation were concerned, no dignity nor interest was lost in the selections which were committed to their pencils.

In the Capella Paulina, and also in the Capella Sistina, the dignity and purity of that pontifical patronage obtained a glorious record by the pencil of Michael Angelo. Nor was another record wanting in many of his sculptures, whether executed at Rome or in Florence, which were not more the prodigies of his art than proofs of exalted ideas in those who had called them forth.

In the pencil of Raphael those proofs appeared still greater, if possible, but at least more abundant. The comparative views of theology* and human science†; or, in other words, the improvement of the human mind, arising from the two great sources of natural wisdom and revealed light: the embellishments which the mind acquires from the progress of poetry‡, whose images give an elevation to ordinary wisdom, and raise those who cultivate it above common men: the provisions made for the welfare of society by the salutary institutions of human laws§: these four subjects of Raphael's pencil in the Vatican were alone sufficient to immortalize the patronage which drew them forth, as well as the hand which executed them, whatever imperfections in their composition the accurately judging mind may discover.

The subjects of the Old Testament, commonly called "Raphael's Bible," on the ceiling of the loggia Vaticana, although they were chiefly executed by the hands of his pupils, yet as his compositions and designs, must be placed to the honour of the same pontifical patronage.

* Dispute on the Sacrament.

† School of Athens.

‡ Parnassus.

§ Law.

But his "acts of the apostles" contained in cartoons are a tribute to that patronage more estimable than any other, because as a body they are the purest of all his works, as well as the grandest. In them we find, for the first time in the history of the pencil, an enlarged and connected narration of revealed truth, delivered to the eyes of mankind. When combined with the subjects of the Old Testament, they manifested a very interesting scope of idea. And they would have been as complete as they should be, if they had been carried to more extent, and had been formed upon an original design of connexion with each other.

"The transfiguration" did honour to the patronage of cardinal de Medicis, as much as it displayed the powers of art. The latter were carried there as high as they could go. Even now, under all the prejudice done by time to its colouring, the mind which is competent to great ideas and which has prepared itself there to meet whatever its highest imaginations of the glorious and the awful can anticipate, beholds that work with a fervour of admiration, which leads it to wonder continually at those peculiar impressions which reached the mind of Raphael, and enabled him to carry that scene to such an astonishing height of expression. Was it not an exalted idea, which opened to mankind what sensible display could be given of the glories vouchsafed in that event by the eternal father to his beloved son?—which called them to contemplate the divine character of him, whose real glories were but faintly figured by those visible ones, and by whom alone such glories were ever experienced?—called them to those proper impressions of religion, which, although far short of what reached the disciples, to whom those glories were visible, might make all beholders to cry out in their language, "it is good for us to be here."

In these varied aspects the papal patronage was dispensed through the sixteenth century, although when the Medici no longer filled the pontifical chair, it did not rise in the subsequent periods of that age to the scale of idea in which we have just seen it, whether more or less pure. So far as superstition was interested, there can be no doubt but its spirit would be embraced and pursued by the religious at least, if not by the laity in general. For the popes did not affect exclusively to dispense the influences of that spirit through the medium of the arts: they dealt out those influences indeed in a higher and more comprehensive style, but they left to subordinate devotees the care of their own saints and miracles. At the same time it is no injustice to many of them to say, that they were perhaps of all others the least dupes to the credulity which they kept up abroad.

It will not follow that the stores of profane learning had not their votaries in that religious meridian. The works of the Carachi in the Farnese palace, drawn from those stores, have been already mentioned. That Farnese family was proud of patronizing the arts, and yet there was rather a selfishness towards their own applause, which ran through the general patronage they afforded. The pencil of Taddeo Zuccherro was exhausted in recording the private history of that house*. Less indeed of that selfishness was seen in the patronage given by cardinal Farnese to the Carachi. But there was selfishness enough of another kind to render that patronage disgraceful. Wretched must have been that cardinal to suffer so paltry an idea

* *Abrege de la Vie*, V. I. p. 20, 21.

as five hundred crowns to enter for a moment into his mind as a compensation for the labour of eight years, and the loss of so much interest at Bologna, which the Carachi had incurred on his account. But what must we think, when not to exceed that small sum he was persuaded to calculate the little refreshments in bread and wine, which those artists had received in the course of their works; and when he had the conscience, besides, to desire into the bargain from their pencils a history of his relation Alexander Farnese, who had died in Flanders a few years before*, and whose history had in fact been painted in the great hall of that palace by Taddeo Zuccherò? That point, ever, he did not obtain. His ungenerous behaviour had done mischief enough. It had shipwrecked the Carachi; and it soon broke poor Annibal's heart. •

We lament that the cardinal, of whom we have spoken, was not single in so vile an example, and that Annibal Carachi was not the only artist, whose heart was broken in that way by the noble patrons at Rome. Poor Francis Mola sickened and died from the vexation given him by prince Pamphili, whom he was obliged to sue for payment of a ceiling which he had painted in that prince's palace†.

Perhaps profane and pagan learning suited such characters better than sacred and revealed. However, in the private palaces of the nobles, and especially in the following century, the pencil was sometimes encouraged in those profane subjects, of which the most distinguished were "the fall of Phaeton" in

* Felib. V. 3. p. 271, 272.

† Abregé de la Vie, V. 1. p. 314.

the marquis Justiniani's palace, and "the history of Apollo" in the palace Verospi, both by Albani: "Bacchus and Ariadne", by Mola, in the palace Coflaguti: "heathen deities" in the palace Altems, and "deeds of ancient Romans" in the great hall of Lanti, both by Romanelli: "subjects of the *Æneid*" in the palace Pamphili, "the rape of the Sabines", "and a battle of "Alexander", in the palace Sachetti, by Pietro da Cortona.

The churches adhered invariably to religion; and if we would wish to see the substance of that patronage which was intended to record the impressive lessons of revelation, but in which superstition had no share, we shall behold it in "the history of divine providence" by Sacchi, in the palace of the cardinal Barberini: "Moses striking the rock", "his rod changed into a serpent", and "Abraham sacrificing his son", by Lanfranc at Monte "Cavallo": "Daniel in the lions den", "Jeremiah drawn up out of the dungeon", "Tobias with the angel", by Salvator Rosa in a private chapel, and "Gideon wringing the dew out of the fleece", in the Vatican: "Peter upon the water", by Lanfranc, in the church of St. Peter: "Peter in prison", and "the conversion of Paul", by Mola in the church of Jesus: "Christ multiplying the loaves": again, "in the garden of Olives"; again, "bearing his cross"; again, "crucified"; and lastly, "ascending", by Lanfranc in various churches of Rome. These were the principal fruits of that Roman patronage in the seventeenth century, which contemplated the purer impressions of revealed history.

When Nicholas Pouffin appears, we become anxious to know how the spirit of patronage was conducted towards him. Let

that spirit have become as contracted as it might in its ordinary course, we naturally expect that the appearance of singular abilities should give it a new spring, and not only attract its direction, but engage it in an elevated manner. So it had been in the case of Michael Angelo and Raphael, to whose superior powers no patronage could have proposed any other than superior objects. The same experience, proportioned to the measure and spirit of their talents, was also enjoyed by the Caracci. We therefore take it for granted, that the pencil of Nicholas Poussin, who, to say the least of him, stood on far higher ground than any others in his age, would be called to nothing below its own elevation.

That was the case in fact; and it was his superior abilities, which gave a superior spirit of sentiment to the patronage which followed him. He could not, and he would not, be engaged in any thing below the contemplation of a great mind*. The selection of subjects worthy of being studied was the pride, as well as the habit, of all his private thoughts. In none of his works do we see any thing trifling, puny, or very common; there is always a character of understanding maintained, an important sentiment pursued, a solidity of instruction, a fact worthy of being recorded, a fiction which delights, if not a grandeur of theme in the first class. Of all the moderns, no man's pencil has been distinguished by a larger assemblage of greater subjects. He sacrificed indeed, as well as others, at the altar of superstitious devotion, but it was very sparingly; of that kind no artist, at all distinguished in his profession, has sent fewer works from his hands; and yet no man ever painted more than he.

* Felib. V. 4. p. 321, 322.

It may appear surprising, that the patronage which was so much his due did not follow him, after all, in Rome. Some allowance may be made for that circumstance, on his first arrival there, and before he became properly known. And therefore his pencil passed unnoticed, unless by the cardinal Barberini and the cavalier del Pozzo. But these were too sensible both of his character and of their own, to diminish either by an improper patronage. The former brought forth his "death of Germanicus," and "Jerusalem taken by Titus"*. The latter committed to his pencil, besides many cabinet pictures, "St. Erasmus," for the church of St. Peter—"St. John baptizing in the desert"—"the passage of the Red sea"—"the adoration of the golden calf"—and "the seven sacraments"†. Felibien has rather intimated, that his paintings were then less sought after in Rome, because their style and execution were different from what was then in vogue‡. But at the same time he mentions a circumstance, often told by Pouffin to his friends, which does not leave us satisfied with that reason. It was this, that having then painted at Rome "a prophet", he only got for it eight franks, when a young artist presently afterwards sold his copy of it for four crowns. The want of that early patronage in the meridian of Rome will be more surely found in the retired and studious habits of his life, and in his contempt of lucre, by which he became more intent on the private cultivation of his art, than on the acquisition of patronage, or the improvement of his fortune,

The truth is, that this great man, although he never could be

* Felib. V. 4. p. 255.

† Ibid. p. 257. 261, 262.

‡ Ibid. p. 248.

separated long from Rome, never added to the two Roman patrons, whom we have mentioned, any others than the cardinals Massimi and Omodeus. The former consulted the dignity of Pouffin's historic talents in two subjects of Moses, when "he tramples on the crown of Pharaoh", and when "his rod is changed into a serpent"*: and the latter no less consulted his poetic powers in "the triumph of Flora†."

The patronage, to which he was so much entitled, and on which the chief fame of his pencil rose, originated in France, not only in his first abode at Rome, but after his return thither, when in obedience to the king's commands he had been two years at Paris, and to the end of his life. The French considered him as the Raphael of their country, and their patronage of his talents never slept. They felt a pride in that patronage. When we look through his numerous works dispersed in France, as Felibien has recorded them, we cannot but suppose that the respectable characters, by whom he was there cherished, vied with one another how they should most adequately meet, in the dignity of subject, the abilities which they wished to engage. If we except "the seven sacraments" abovementioned, and "a miracle of St. Francis Xavier", there are hardly any others which contributed by their subjects to legend and superstition. And certainly never was any patronage met before or since in the manner in which it was embraced by Pouffin. He was so superior to the considerations of gain, that he frequently returned to his patrons whatever exceeded the price which his humility and disinterestedness had put upon his works.

* Felib. V. 4. p. 323.

† Ibid. p. 327.

It is not improbable, that the patronage of Rome was so little afforded him, because it could not rise from an attachment to legend and superstition so as to meet his abilities with the dignity which became them. Beyond doubt, the spirit of Roman patronage was not then in it's most elevated period, if we contemplate what it produced then and afterwards from others. Carlo Maratti saw seven successions of popes, by all of whom he was equally cherished for near seventy years. In all that period a subject of "clemency" on a ceiling of the palace Altieri, and in the chapel of that name in the church of Minerva, was one of the very few sentiments, unconnected with superstition, which were given to his pencil; and that was, in fact, a studied compliment of Clement X. to himself, or to his pontifical title; although he had no great reason to be pleased with his pun, if it were to pass as a feature of his patronage. That curious thought was, nevertheless, accompanied in the same chapel of Altieri by "five saints canonized" by the same pope, under the same pencil. The abilities of Bianchi saw their best excursion from some triter subjects of sacred and profane history, and from more which were devoted to superstition, in "fame crown-ing merit" for the cardinal Albani, afterwards Clement XI. Lutti, his master, was at the head of St. Luke's academy; and his chef d'œuvre, amidst hardly any thing but legend, was "a miracle of St. Pio", in the palace Albani.

It is astonishing, when we look through the works of art at Rome in the seventeenth century, to see how seldom they rose on any enlarged sentiment, on any sentiment unconnected with the church. With the exception of very few instances, the labours of all were nearly alike. The history of the Virgin was

worn out in all its views; but her "conception" was the sure study of every artist at one time or other, and almost of every patron. If any scope was to be taken, the system of the papal church was ready and sufficient to supply it. Therefore the history of the countess Matilda, the friend, and, some have said, the mistress of Gregory VII. but the warrior too on his behalf, and the great donor of temporal dominions to the Roman church, was displayed to every advantage in the Vatican. The glory of the ecclesiastical power rose also in its pride in the Barberini palace, and with whatever scope the genius of Pietro da Cortona could give it.

Indeed, as we advance in that period, the ecclesiastical patronage of art seems to have gone to some new and greater lengths in the bigotry of superstition. In the same Barberini palace a plague is stayed by the prayers of a Romish saint, and the destroying angel sheaths his sword. With the religious of St. Joseph, that saint covers St. Theresa with a mantle, while the Virgin puts a chain of gold around her neck. In the chapel of Paul V. within the church of St. Mary Maggiore, the Virgin gives the habit to St. Ildefonso. In the chapel Cerro, within the church of Jesus, St. Charles Borromeo is on his knees before the Virgin, who is seated on the clouds, and holding Jesus. These strange combinations of ideas, for the gratification of superstition, were much indulged on the ceilings and cupolas of churches, which afforded great space, and contained works that were beheld with the utmost veneration. Lanfranc's cupola of St. Andrew de la Valle was the admiration of the age; and deservedly as a work of art. But, as a subject, no work could be more strangely conceived; the ideas are miscellaneously collected and

combined for the single purpose of completing the glory of Mary. Not less extraordinary was the whole ceiling and cupola of St. Charles al Corso by Brandi. There Lucifer falls from heaven, and St. Charles is carried up thither : God the father, the four prophets, and the miracle of the plague are associated to make up the rest. "The vision of the lamb" by Bacici in the cupola and the angles of the church of Jesus, had more simplicity, although with very strong contrasts of scene ; but those contrasts were natural, they became union. Heaven and hell make a whole hereafter : the scene is whole, which offers them both to our contemplation now.

This brings the Roman patronage into the present century. And in those works of Bacici, with others in the same church, in the cupola of St. Agnes, and on the ceilings of one or two other churches, were seen the last of those more splendid and copious subjects, which had issued from eminent pencils, in honour of Latin saints, and in support of Romish superstition. Yet in lesser and triter exhibitions of the same kind no alteration has since taken place, so far as that attachment to superstition has at all produced a patronage of art. But, indeed, the holy fathers at Rome, as well as elsewhere, appear rather to have had a sufficiency of art ; either their mansions are fully stocked, or they have been for some time contented to feed on what they have already obtained.

When Lambertini, who had been archbishop of Bologna, became pope by the name of Benedict XIV. he struck out a new idea for the pencil, for which he selected that of Crespi a Bolognese ; and it was an idea which has since been much embraced, at least in other countries than Italy, by artists who were willing

to make the most of subjects, although in truth it sunk the art into the very bathos of the historic. But so far as it set the example in Rome of carrying the pencil out of the Romish religion, we wonder not to see that example given by him, whose undisguised detestation of the abuses and grosser superstitions of that religion procured him the name of the Protestant pope. If in that example he also overlooked whatever was connected with learning, it was not because he knew not the value of it, or did not abundantly possess it. And if in that instance it might be said, that instead of religion he gave a mob to the pencil, he was probably little concerned for the reflexion, so far as it might light on superstition.

The patronage then, which he extended to Crespi, was a commission to paint the interview of the person, who is distinguished by the name of our Pretender, with his holiness's legate and his court. Nothing could be more formal, dull, and insipid. Compared with all that had been done in Rome, nothing could be more burlesque, and more extraordinary from a pope. It became a mere assemblage of portraits and dresses. But it served to put the whole court into a flutter, while the profound Lambertini sat and laughed at them all. The princes, the cardinals, and the ladies were all eager to see their portraits, and how they were placed. Among the rest the countess Virginia Sachetti, who was then to be married to the senator Caprara, had her picture there. The marshal of that name, who was at Vienna, hearing of the general bustle and impatience on that occasion, interceded very strongly for the portrait of the countess's waiting woman to be added to that of her mistress, remarking with a sneer, "*che come la derrata la giunta volea*".

FINIS.

ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA,

In Vol. I.

Page 6. line 8. for *his* read *her*.

- 9. l. 10. dele comma after *penman*.
- 10. l. 20. dele comma after *dictated*.
l. 27. dele comma after *instance*.
- 12. l. 3. dele *them*.
- 13. l. 13. dele comma after *force*.
- 18. l. 26. for *fills and lifts* r. *raises and fills*.
- 21. l. 5. for *to* r. *so*.
- 25. l. 3. for *participate* r. *share*.
l. 27. for *be spit upon* r. *taint*.
- 33. l. 8. for *noble patronages* r. *very exalted*.
l. 9. dele *in the Vatican*.
l. 18. for *it's chair* r. *the chair of St. Peter's*.
l. 11. for *fill it's chambers* r. *adorn the chambers of the Vatican*.
- 35. l. 24. after *profane* r. *and*; for *false stuff* r. *idea*.
- 37. l. 25. r. *rodomontade*.
- 40. l. 11. r. *Carachi*.
- 42. l. 3. dele *the*.
- 43. l. 16. for *is to* r. *must*.
- 49. l. 23. for *suit* r. *sute*.
- 50. l. 15. for *fid* r. *fit*.
- 57. l. 16. for *equally* r. *almost*.
l. 19. for *never* r. *hardly ever*. After that sentence add, the deviation from that rule had been made here in one or two historic compositions before that of which we are now speaking, but not with so much established success.
- 59. l. 21. for *an unique of composure, of settled satisfaction* r. *a peculiar composure and satisfaction*.
- 60. l. 22. for *themselves* r. *itself*.
l. 23. for *accomplished* r. *satisfied*.
- 74. l. 17. for *is to* r. *must*.
l. 19. after *but* r. *it must be*.
- 77. l. 11. for *breadth* r. *compass*.
- 80. l. 2. for *that* r. *which*.
l. 7. for *company with* r. *companions of*.
- 96. l. 14. for *pores* r. *courfes*.
- 97. l. 4. for *to* r. *in*.
- 115. l. 1. for *so* r. *of*.
- 133. l. 8. for *if* r. *of*.
- 180. l. 5. for *demesticis* r. *domesticis*.
l. 20. after *comes* dele the rest of the sentence, and r. *was as high as their taste in domestic pictures went*.
- 196. l. 6. for *lift* r. *raise*.
- 265. l. last but one: for *nebrides* r. *nebris*.
- 267. l. 15. for *bassarides* r. *bassara*.
- 329. l. 4. for *Athens* r. *the Athenians*.

ERRATA ET CORRIGENDA.

In Vol. II.

Page 13. l. 24. for *Palasgian* r. *Pelasgian*.

- 121. l. 9. dele comma after *had*, and place it after *it*.
l. 17 dele comma after *moment*.
- 328. l. 12. before *in* r. *not*, and dele *not* after *denominated*.
- 343. in notis—dele Felib. V. 1. p. 194. and r. Valari, V. 1. p. 431.
- 428. l. 24. for *Rome* r. *Parma or Modena*.

